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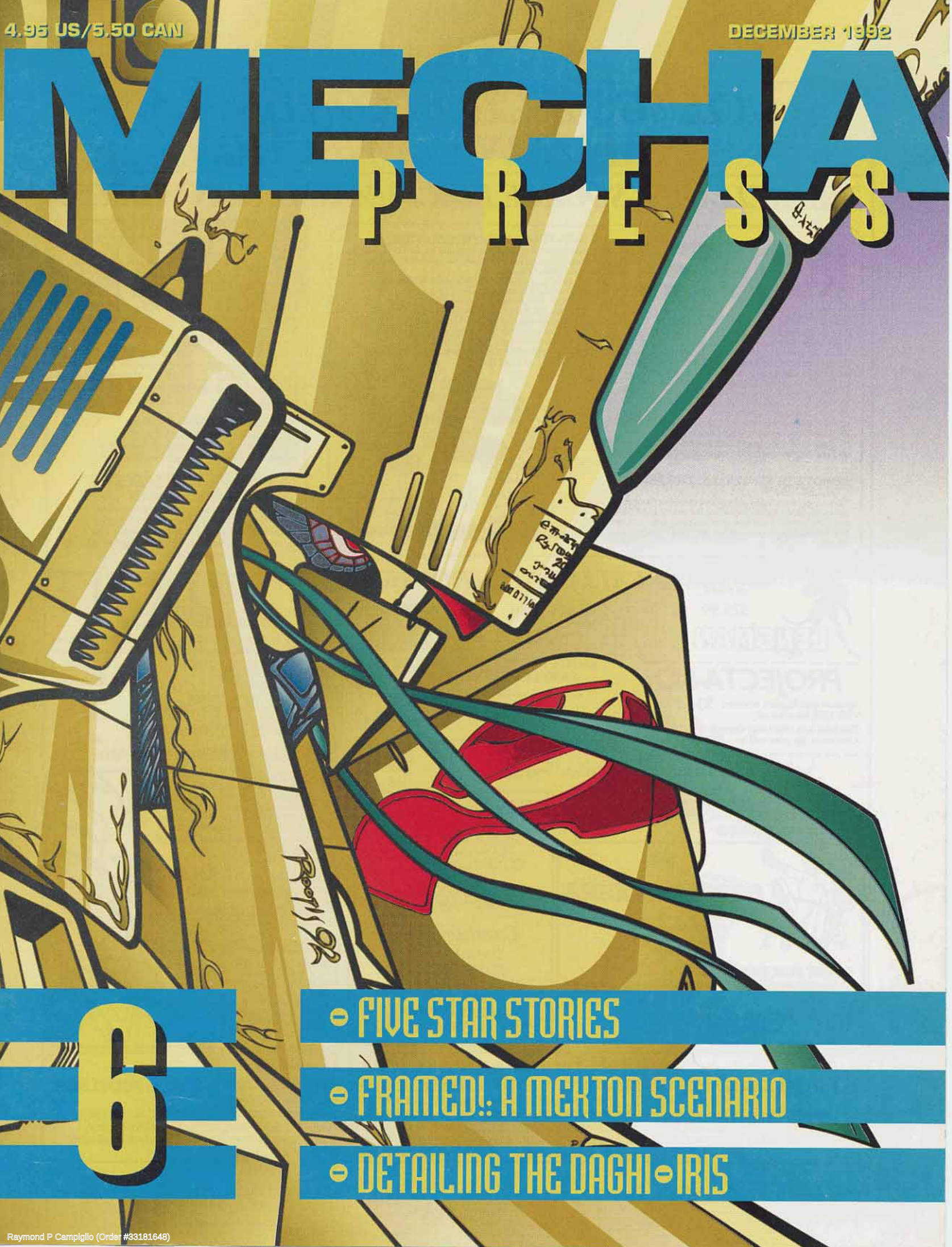

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- FIVE STAR STORIES
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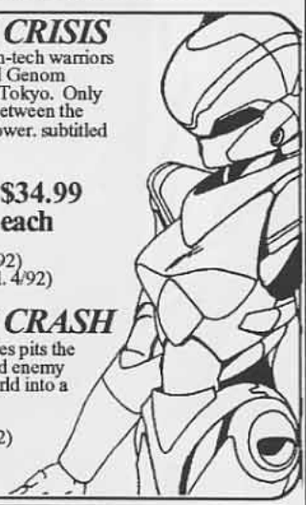

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Judith Lanouette
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Jean Carrières
Robert Dubois
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Bill Mayo

Errata: We forgot to thank Jimmy Mah in the last issue for his proofreading. Mea culpa...

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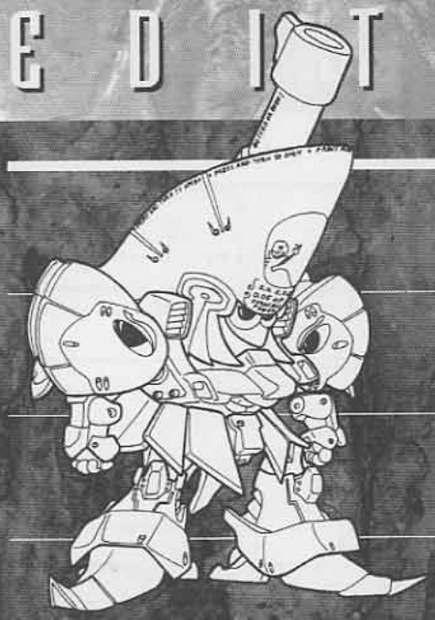
EDITORIAL



WHERE AM I GOING TO FIND THIS?

by Martin Ouellette

This editorial isn't so much an editorial as it is an homage. As the author of many features in this magazine, I sometimes find myself in a strange position: I must write about certain subjects using the small quantity of translated material we were able to get. Although this rarely happened, I've had to look for outside help despite my knowledge in the field of anime. Of course, the texts are mine but the information comes from outside sources, namely translators, writers in computer mail conferences and fanzines.

These people work out synopses, technical info, characters' sheets, scripts, and make them available to the public. They work very hard and are often not being paid for it. They are studying and/or working, and even then, their passion for their hobby is so consuming that they'll take what little spare time they have to give other fans all their knowledge and experience. These people are usually unrecognized, even by those using their material for lucrative goals.

I'm sure I'm not the only one that ever found himself in the position I described earlier; yet rarely do we see an acknowledgment of those behind-the-scene workers. So I wish to pay homage to those whose work helped me. I would like to thank: Kenichiro Tanaka, whose GUNDAM 0080 script made me understand the storyline so I could write my synopsis; James Meier, for the BUBBLEGUM CRISIS character texts that gave me much help when I had to do my articles very, very fast; and Patricia Munson-Sitter for her fantastic FSS article that helped me understand many things that remained a mystery until I read it. I would also like to thank my dear friend Miyako Graham who translates from Japanese all the information we need.

All those people I congratulate for their selflessness and professionalism. Shouldn't every user of their stuff do the same?

Martin Ouellette

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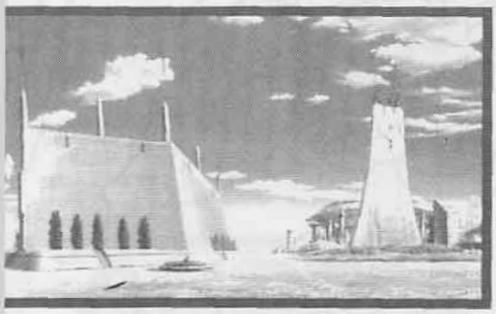
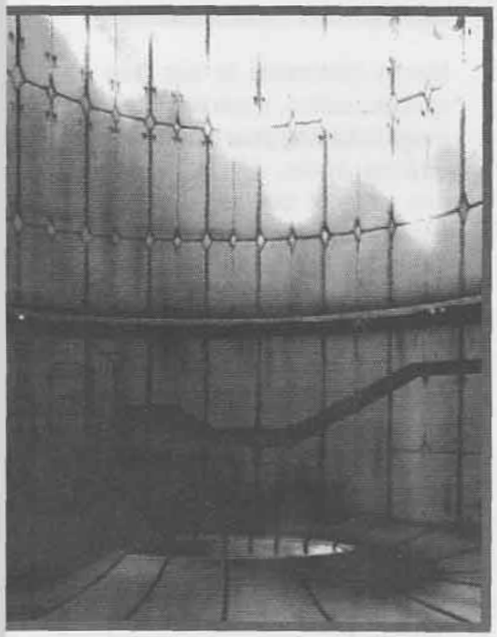
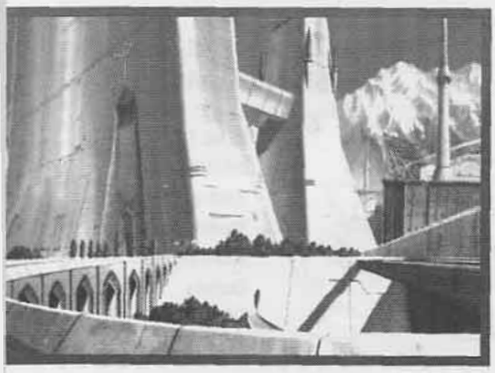
WHAT'S FIVE STAR STORIES

by Martin Ouellette







As our cover loudly advertises, this month's subject is Mamoru Nagano's famed masterpiece, THE FIVE STAR STORIES. First published as monthly installments in NEW TYPE Magazine in early 1986, it soon skyrocketed to cult status, both for Nagano's artwork and the incredibly intricate storyline.

FSS's most noticeable traits are its characters and mechas. Since Nagano was a fashion designer, his characters are a reflection of this part of his training. They are extremely tall with very long and thin limbs, very wild haircuts and clothes that truly stand out from the usual styling seen in science-fiction mangas. An interesting detail is that many characters of FIVE STAR STORIES are re-designs of characters from Nagano's earlier work HEAVY-METAL L-GAIM. That is particularly true for Colus VI looking like a clone of Daba Myroad, the L-Gaim's pilot, and Amaterasu Des Grand Adas De Mikado whose look is highly inspired by Oldna Poseidal, the king of the Pentagona star system (which also inspired FSS's Joker star system). The same applies to Mortar Heads. Many of them are re-designs of the older machines from L-Gaim. For example, the Jünchoon First Sally type is inspired from the L-Gaim MK-I and the A-Toll Mortar Head is virtually unchanged from the A-Taul Heavy-Metal.

Five Star Stories' fiction also follows that of L-Gaim in some ways. The plot mostly deals with the ambitions of the king of the A.K.D., Amaterasu No Mikado, to be star emperor of the Joker system and the incidents those ambitions stir up. As the story unfolds, Amaterasu finds himself forced to fight the descendants of his once allies, like Colus V and VI, who are the descendants of Colus III, king of the Trio de Colus and one of Amaterasu's best friends.

As of today, five compilation volumes are out and Nagano hasn't given a sign of wanting to stop! In this issue of Mecha-Press, we focus on the O.V.A. that recounts the first volume of the manga, DESTINY LACHESIS, in which Amaterasu has to assume his cover identity—Ladioss Sopp—to save his promised Fatima, Lachesis. You will find a synopsis of this O.V.A., character files, along with other information.

We truly hope that you, dear readers, will enjoy this wonderful story!

Raymond P. Campiglio (Order #33161845)

93 SUMMER CONVENTIONS

This summer will be pretty busy for the mecha gamers, with at least three conventions!

GEN CON '93

GEN CON '93, the world's biggest game fair, comes to MECCA in Milwaukee for another four days of non-stop gaming. This includes computer, military, role-playing, strategy, miniatures, video, arcade, PBM, and board games — over 1,000 events! The GEN CON game fair also features a $1 million art show, new sci-fi/fantasy/horror movie releases, dozens of celebrities, a costume contest, a huge game auction, a 200-booth exhibit hall, tournaments, prizes, and much more! Join over 18,000 gamers at the GEN CON game fair August 19-22, 1993. It will be THE place to meet the creators and writers of all the giant robot games you've been playing. For information, call Sandy Kinney at (414) 248-3625 or FAX (414) 248-0389. (TSR)

ANIME AMERICA

Anime America is a new convention in California this summer. It will be held June 25-27 at the Westin Hotel in Santa Clara. It is NOT Anime Expo with a name-change. They say it is "A Celebration of Japanese Animation and Comics" but if you look at the (impressive) guest list you will notice that it is more manga-oriented. The Guests of Honor are: Johji Manabe (*Outlanders*, *Caravan Kidd*), Monkey Punch (*Lupin III*), Fred Patten (C/FO), Nobuyuki Sugaya (ACC Productions), Adam Warren (Artist and co-writer of the *Dirty Pair* Comics), Yoshihiro Yonezawa (President of Japan's 150,000-member *Comic Market*), and Haruka Takachiho (*Crusher Joe*, *Dirty Pair*). The other confirmed guests are: L. Lois Buhalis, Robert DeJesus, Doug Dlin, Colleen Doran, Jo Duffy, Ben Dunn, Greg Espinoza, Lea Hernandez, Tom Orzechowski, Tomoko Saito, Frederik L. Schodt, and Rick Sternbach. The principle event will be: Special 3-D animation premiere, 35mm & 16mm film program, cels auction, cels & fanzines workshop, artist and industry panels, art show, dealer's room, 2 large screen theatres, 3 video channels, gaming. The room rate is $69 per day and you can reserve (before May, 27) at the Santa Clara Westin Hotel (408) 986-0700. The membership is $30 through March 15th, $35 through June 1st, and $45 at the door ($20 for "one day"). Send checks (payable to "Anime America") or inquiries to: Anime America, 298-4th Ave., Suite 472, San Francisco, CA 94118, USA. You can also call at the voice mail line: (415) 241-8823, FAX: (408) 748-9620.

ANIME EXPO '93

Anime Expo '93, the International Animation and Manga Exposition, will be held July 2nd to July 4th at The Oakland Convention Center, Oakland, California. It will be hosted for a second year by The Society for the Promotion of Japanese Animation (SPJA). It is a non-profit organization dedicated to the popularization of Japanese animation and manga in the United States by being a bridge between fans and professionals. Their goal is also to promote cultural understanding by presenting Japanese culture as viewed through the eyes of the professional artists. Last year's convention was a great success and it will be pretty huge this year: they will be using around 38,000 square feet of convention and meeting space of the Oakland Convention Center and are expecting at least 2,000 attendees. Guests of Honor: Scott Frazier, Michitaka Kikuchi (Silent Mobius), Hiroyuki Kitazume (Char Counterattack), Makoto Kobayashi (Giant Robo), and Haruhiko Mikimoto (Macross). Events: American guests, two live programming tracks, 25,000 sq.ft dealers' room, film program, autograph sessions, meet-the-guest reception, banquets, costume contest & masquerade, gaming, 7,500 sq.ft art show, charity auction, 4 to 5 video channels, modeling contest, cel & modeling workshops and dance! You can reserve your room at the Park Oakland Hotel, 1001 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94607, USA. PH: (510) 451-4000. The memberships (make checks to the Society for the Promotion of Japanese Animation) are $35 until March 1st, $40 until June 1st, or $45 at the door. Address all inquiries (with SASE) to ANIME EXPO '93, 2425 B Channing, suite 684, Berkeley, CA 94704, USA.

MECHA COMMENTS

Mecha-comments is our free speech section. If you are interested in having your comments on films, books, videos, animation and, of course, models, published, please write to us. The same applies for the "Tips and Tricks" section. You have a good modeling trick? Share it with us! We truly need you to help us serve you to the best of our capabilities. If you have photos, technical drawings, synopses or other materials, send them to us and help us make "MECHA-PRESS"'s next issue even better than the one you hold in your hand at this very moment.

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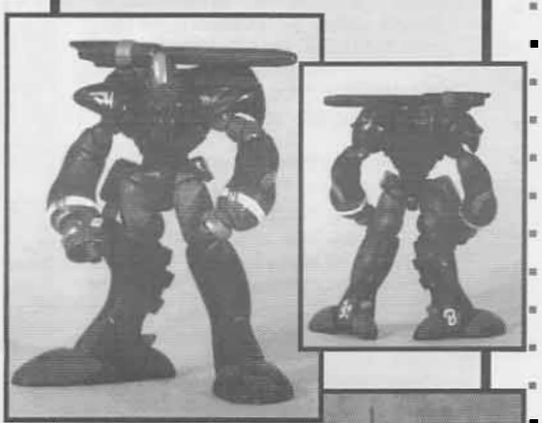
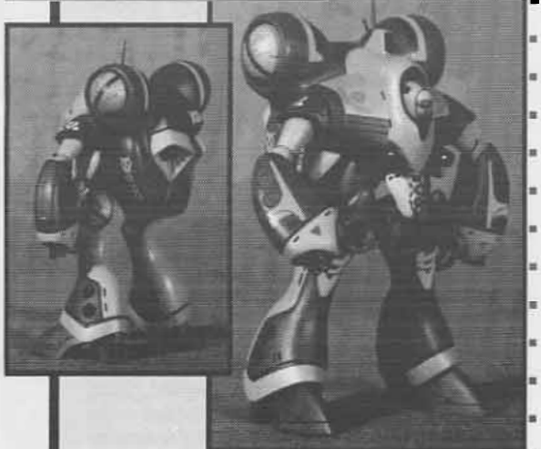
MECHA-PRESS INFO

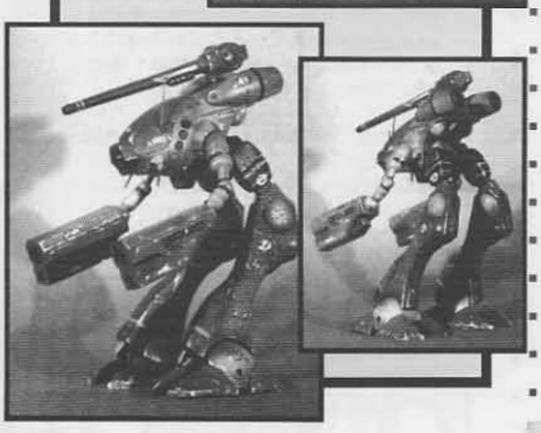
MACROSS MODELS

Following the rise in popularity of the MACROSS series due to the success of the MACROSS II OVA, Bandai is re-releasing several old kits. Some of them used to be very rare, and were hard to get. Not anymore! The plastic model kits made available again by Bandai are the following: 1/100 Super Battroid VF-1S, 1/100 Destroid Tomahawk, 1/100 Destroid Phalanx, 1/144 Zentraedi Male powered armor, 1/72 Battroid VF-1S, 1/144 Zentraedi Female powered armor, 1/100 Variable Super Battroid VF-1S, 1/100 Officer Battle Pod Glaug.

Macross Models, manufactured by Bandai, plastic model kits, 1/144 to 1/72 scale.



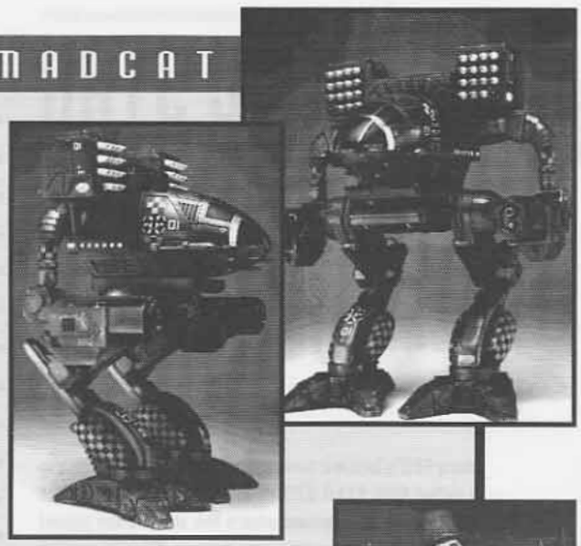




BATTLETECH MADCAT

Following an agreement with FASA Corp., Horizon is producing a 1/30 scale vinyl model of the famous Madcat Clan OmniMech, a favorite of Battletech players. Standing nearly 13" tall and 12" wide, this highly detailed model was sculpted by special effects artist John Ferrari, who is specialized in mechanical props in the movie industry. It should be available soon, directly from Horizon (#HOR044).

Battletech Madcat, manufactured by Horizon, vinyl model kit, 1/30 scale.



MOVIE MODELS

HORIZON Hobbies and Toys is not only importing Japanese models but is also a manufacturer of highly detailed super heroes vinyl model kits. They already produced kits for Universal Movie Monsters, Marvel Comics Super Heroes, Robocop, Terminator 2, for a total of 24 characters. In the last months of 1992, they also released vinyl kits of Batman Returns, Robocop 3, Indiana Jones, Bram Stoker's Dracula, Terminator 2 (additional characters), Godzilla, Jurassic Park, and a Horizon original dinosaurs set.

From the movie BATMAN RETURNS there is a kit of Batman with a vinyl cape (#HOR031), a kit of the Catwoman (#HOR032), and one of the Penguin (#HOR033). The Penguin's kit includes one Commando Penguin (a penguin with a missile on his back). All kits are in 1/6 scale and retails at $35.00 US.

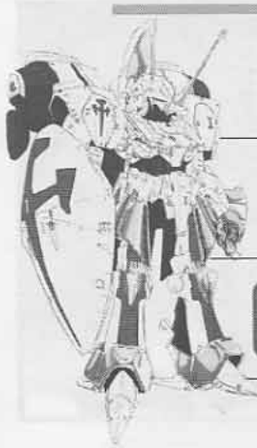
From Bram Stoker's DRACULA, there are three different kits. Dracula Armor Type (#HOR040) comes with two different heads: one with armor, and the other without (as a conversion kit). This kit was sculpted by Taishiroo Kiya who sculpted Venom and Catwoman. Dracula Wolf Type (#HOR041) was sculpted by Greg Smith who is a Hollywood Special Effect sculptor. He has worked on "Death Becomes Her", "Highway to Hell", "Universal Soldier", "Dick Tracy", "The Howling #6", and many more movies. Dracula Bat Type (#HOR042) was sculpted by Glenn Hanz, who worked on the Bat Type Dracula for Columbia Pictures. All kits are in 1/6 scale.

Famous movie figures, manufactured by Horizon, vinyl figure kits, 1/6 scale.

EXPLORATIONS IN PAINTING

Horizon is offering a very helpful video called "Explorations in Painting" (#HOR2001). This video introduces classic painting techniques such as dry-brushing and washing, as well as detailing and airbrushing. The major objective of this video is to teach beginners how to paint, by providing not only techniques but also tips and tricks. Even the veteran modeler can benefit from this video by learning and picking up new hints. The video can also serve as a reference to any painter whether interested in vinyl kits, resin kits, or even lead figures. EXPLORATIONS IN PAINTING is a 55 minutes video cassettes that contains tips on assembly, painting, finishing, and some suggestions on customizing. It retails at the low price of $15.95 US. It is produced by Timberwolf Productions for Horizon.

Beyond the Gates of Antares

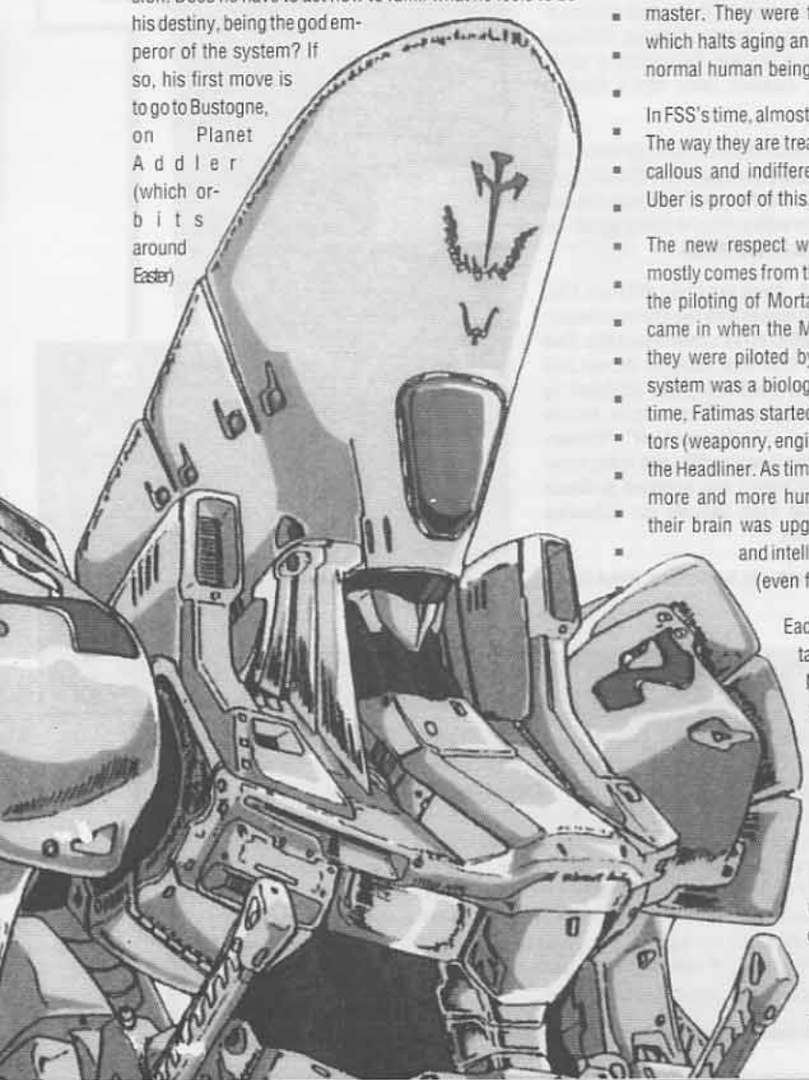


FIVE STAR STORIES OVERVIEW

by Martin Ouellette

Many FFS's fans we meet ask us this question: "Why is it called FIVE STAR STORIES?" Simple: there are five stars in the star system where the story takes place! Well, that's a rather simplistic answer. The star system in question, the Joker system, is in fact composed of four real stars, called Northe, Southern, Easter and Wester. The fifth star is actually a comet named Slant, which passes through the Joker system once every 1500 years.

As in many cultures, this heralds great changes, both for people and nations. It is 2988 and emperor Amaterasu watches the coming of the comet with a certain apprehension. Does he have to act now to fulfill what he feels to be his destiny, being the god emperor of the system? If so, his first move is to go to Bustogne, on Planet Addler (which orbits around Easter) to get his promised Fatima, Lachesis, the 44th Fatima of his friend Dr Chrome Ballanche. Ballanche is the greatest "meight" (people who create Fatimas) of the star system. His last two Fatimas, Lachesis and Clotho (#45) have just been kidnapped by Uber, regent of Bustogne. Uber is a known pervert and would like to have a young and beautiful Fatima to treat as a sex slave—something Amaterasu certainly doesn't want to happen to Lachesis. So under the identity of Ladioss Sopp, Mortar Head meister (Mortar Head builder), Amaterasu goes to Addler to save Lachesis from the dirty paws of Uber.



The way the regent of Bustogne treats the two young Fatimas is not new. Artificially created human beings (genetically engineered), the Fatimas were first used as cannon fodder in the military. They slowly became "out of style", then very rare, serving nearly exclusively as sex toys for rich perverts. Although human in all aspects (except that they cannot reproduce), they were treated no better than animals.

With the advent of the "Machine Messiah", the first Mortar Head, things started to change. When it became evident that the enormous humanoid machines—even if they have a brain—were too complicated for one pilot to handle, the idea of using Fatimas as systems operators came to mind. To make them more obediant, mental limiters were installed; with these devices, the Fatimas can only choose a Headliner (Mortar Head pilot) as their master. They were treated with the "Ezlazer Process" which halts aging and makes them ten times faster than normal human beings.

In FSS's time, almost all Fatimas are females (two males). The way they are treated has changed but there remains callous and indifferent people who treat them cruelly. Uber is proof of this.

The new respect with which the Fatimas are treated mostly comes from the fact that they are badly needed for the piloting of Mortar Heads. Those big machines first came in when the Machine Messiah appeared. At first, they were piloted by only one Headliner; their control system was a biological computer called "Etriml". With time, Fatimas started replacing them as systems operators (weaponry, engine, etc.) leaving the actual fighting to the Headliner. As time went by, the Mortar Heads became more and more humanoid looking. The complexity of their brain was upgraded, giving them consciousness and intelligence, as well as feelings like loyalty (even friendship in some cases).

Each country has its own brand of Mortar Head but the best is the AKD's Led Mirage. Equipped with Ezlazer engines capable of giving trillions of Hp's, the Mirage's power is nonetheless dwarfed by the 3 trillions' of the Knight of Gold, Amaterasu's personal Mortar Head. This actually gives it the power to use a "Buster Launcher", a kind of warp cannon used to finally end the evil of Uber. The only Mortar Head rumored to be as powerful as the Knight of Gold is Colus III's "Symbol of Colus Jünchoon". But that remains to be seen!

ANIMATION FSS

Although I've been a fan of Japanese animation for years—I was made aware of it by Robotech—one of my high points was definitely being introduced to FIVE STAR STORIES. I first saw it as a compilation in a comic shop in Montreal. Although I could not understand the story described before my eyes wide open and admiring, I was instantly seduced by its characters and the incredible mechas this Nagano guy was drawing.

I continued to follow the story (or at least the drawings!) in Newtype magazine and got more and more enthralled by it. Imagine my look when I learned that there was an animation of it! It became even wilder when someone told me he had a copy of it. I had expected greatness and I was given even more!

I have seen many, many animations since then but few come to the level of the FIVE STAR STORIES OVA. Although it is only one hour long, the video recounts the action of the entire first compilation of the manga. The characters, although reworked for a more "animation" style, are absolutely incredible. Each little strand of hair moves with the breeze! Their clothes, designed by Nagano himself, are a marvel to look at, especially the ones worn by Fatimas.

We do not see the Mortar Heads very much but when it happens, they draw all the attention. The scene with the Knight of Gold is truly awsome and gives the majestic feel of that machine very well. The music is also incredibly good, giving the kind of atmosphere I first felt in the movie STAR WARS. The song during the end credits is also one of my favorites in animation music. Titled "So Far Away", it gives a feeling of lightness that I liked very much.

The colors are also high points of this animation. The rendering of the metallic surfaces is exquisite and the light, pastel colors are a favorite of mine (you see, I love NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF WIND, so...).

For the moment, it seems that there will be no follow up to the first part, but I'm patient. Maybe if its popularity rises enough...

(Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

MORTAR HEAD TECHNOLOGY

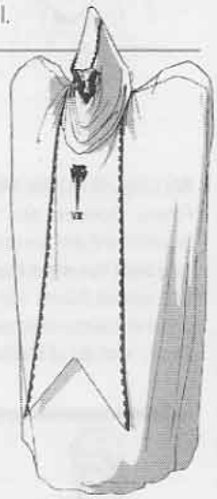
Each of the machines in Five Star Stories has been lovingly designed to include as many details as possible. For all the mecha buffs out there we present this showcase on the working of the Mortar Head.

ROSTER OF KNIGHTS AND ALLIES

All Mortar Heads are piloted by a knight known as Headliner. He controls the movements of the machine from a chest-mounted cockpit, and is in command of the mecha.

The elite Headliners are called Temple Knights: they are the best pilots in the FSS world. They are regrouped into Temples, or knight organizations. Here is a short list of the best known Temples:

A'P Temple knights: They serve Ashua on planet Both. Their Mortar Head is the A-Toll.



Mirage Temple knights: They serve as Amaterasu's personal guards (see listing on page 16). Their Mortar Heads are the Led Mirage and its variants.

Lown Temple knights: They serve Coballkan Sutra on planet Kalamity Goderce. Their Mortar Head is the Bang Doll.

Mejojo Temple knights: They serve the Mejojo imperial court on planet Both. Their Mortar Head is the Ashura Temple.

God's Temple knights: They serve the A.K.D. (Amaterasu Kingdom Demesnes) on planet Delta Belune after Amaterasu becomes Star Emperor (in the year 3960). Their Mortar Head is the Led Mirage.

Trio Temple knights: They serve the Trio de Colus on planet Juno. Their Mortar Head is the Berlin White-Violet.

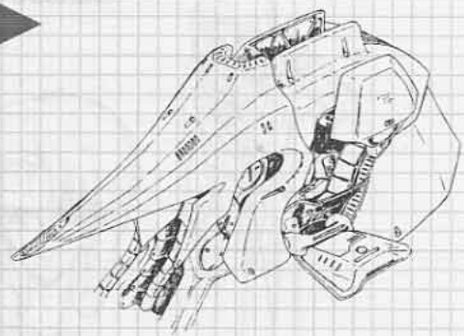
Scaja Temple knights: They serve the country of Conelah. Their Mortar Head is the Khan.

Nue Sytriss knights: They serve Philmore on planet Kalamity Goderce. Their Mortar Head is the Siren.

Woglah Temple knights: They serve Bustogne on Addler. They are also known as Rodd's knights. Their Mortar Head is the Helmine.

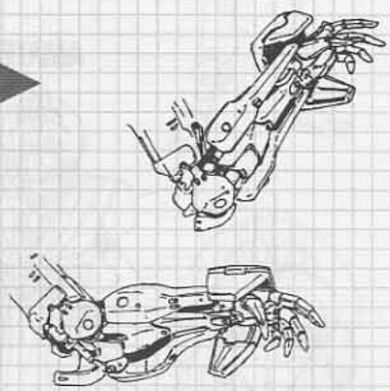
HEAD MOVEMENTS

The Led Mirage's head is controlled by the movements of the Headliner via the helmet. As we can see in this illustration, it also contains the system operator cockpit where the Fatima sit. The small gunport in front of the hatch is a low-powered laser, while those on the forehead are grapple launchers. The heat blade and the large crest are removed for clarity.



FOREARM

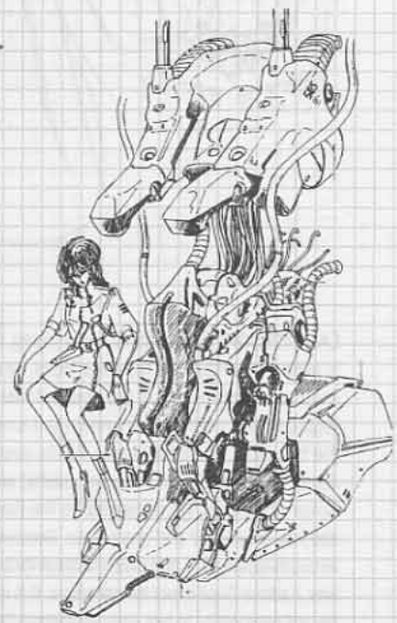
The elbow of the Led Mirage permits a wide range of motion. The articulations can in fact reproduce all the movements of the human elbow. Although mostly mechanical, the limbs are controlled by a biological nervous system.



MORTAR HEAD COCKPIT

The cockpit of a mortar head is quite special: the pilot does not sit in it. He (or she) is actually standing up, his legs, arms and head being encased in articulated control components. The pilot moves these and the computer/brain of the mecha interprets the movements before sending them to the machine's own articulations. This type of control makes the Mortar Head a kind of giant powersuit!

This cockpit is also employed in Gunbuster (albeit in a much simpler form) and is much more realistic than other cockpit designs.



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FIVE STAR STORIES CHARACTERS

by Martin Ouellette

LADIOSS SOPP

AMATERASU

LADIOSS SOPP: Although he looks young, Ladioss Sopp is quite old. Despite his feminine looks, he certainly isn't a woman! Sopp is one of the greatest meisters (Mortar Head designer) in the Joker system and is responsible for the two most powerful Mortar Heads ever created: the A.K.D.'s Knight of Gold (his own mecha) and the Trio De Colus' Jünchoon. He is married to the Fatima Lachesis and has brown hair and green eyes. Because of his rather feminine appearance, he's often mistaken for a woman. By the way, Ladioss Sopp is not his real name. It is only a cover for his real personality. In fact, he is Amaterasu Des Grand Adas De Mikado, the god emperor of the A.K.D!

AMATERASU DES GRAND ADAS DE MIKADO (AMATERASU NO MIKADO): The god emperor of the A.K.D., Amaterasu is extremely old -he was born in 2020, and Five Star Stories begins in 2989! The legend goes that he may have undergone a treatment usually used on Fatimas only, the Ezlazer process. That would explain why he looks so young and fresh when he's nearly a thousand years old! Amaterasu's greatest ambition is to be Star Emperor, master of the entire Joker star system. Being albino, he has white hair and his eyes are a piercing red. When he wants to go around without any hassle (except maybe by Headliners who would like him to upgrade their Mortar Heads), he adopts the personality of Ladioss Sopp, a young man with brown hair and green eyes, renowned as the greatest meister of the star system. When he goes around as Sopp, there is always someone to replace him, if for appearances only. Those doubles are, strangely enough, often women.

#44 LACHESIS

BALLANCHE FATIMA #44 LACHESIS: One of the three Fatima Fates created by Doctor Chrome Ballanche. Lachesis is one very important character in Five Star Stories. Ladioss Sopp's Fatima since her unveiling, she's a young and innocent looking girl with short brown hair and luminous blue eyes. Later in the story, her hair become jet black (Colus III calls her "marine" haired) and she starts to wear the distinctive red and black Fatima garb. She is the greatest Fatima ever created and is pivotal to the events of F.F.S. There are hints that unlike the other Fatimas, she might be able to bear children.

#45 CLOTHO

BALLANCHE FATIMA #45 CLOTHO: The second greatest Fatima, Clotho is also one of the Fatima Fates. Very beautiful and delicate (even for a Fatima) Clotho has very long black hair and dresses in red and black. She is Colus III's second Fatima (Uricul is first) and will belong to Colus VI, the man supposed to beat Amaterasu. Strangely, Clotho is afraid of Mortar Heads and even hates them.

DR. BALLANCHE

DR. CHROME BALLANCHE: The creator of the Fatima Fates, Dr. Ballanche is, without any doubt, the greatest and most respected Fatima meight in the history of the Joker system. A great scientist, he never sacrificed his humanity for his work and always treated his Fatimas as daughters. As an experiment on the last three (#43, 44 and 45), he omitted the mental limiters that are usually part of a Fatima's brain. As a result, Lachesis, Clotho and Atropos are able to do whatever they wish. Ballanche is, at the end of the story, dying of a mysterious and fatal disease, which he tries to control with powerful medication. One of his best friends is Ladioss Sopp.

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

VOARDS VIEWLARD

VOARDS VIEWLARD (MISSION ROUTH): One of the freelance Headliners in Five Star Stories, Viewlard, under his rogue-ish good looks and "boys will be boys" attitude, is President Mission Routh of Bustogne. His Viewlard persona, like Amaterasu's Ladioss Sopp, is a cover for going around unnoticed. He and Sopp often have misunderstandings about the young meister's sexual identity, a situation that often leads to extremely funny incidents (the now famous drunk scene of the movie is an example). Viewlard's Fatima is Ballanche Fatima #40 Megaella. He pilots a modified Mortar Head named Bulunge.

KING COLUS III

KING COLUS III (XXIII): The best king of the star system, Colus III is, in reality, Colus XXIII - many of the royal names do not use the tens in FSS. Colus is also a great meister and a great Headliner. His charisma is legendary and his courage known by all. He will have two Fatimas. The first one, Morard Fatima Uricul, is killed during the Jünchoon's first sortie. Clotho, Ballanche Fatima #45, becomes his second one but Colus dies in combat soon after taking her in with him. He is a great friend of Ladioss Sopp but there are many hints that he knows who his young friend really is. His descendant Colus VI will become Amaterasu's greatest enemy.

REGENT OF BUSTOGNE

UBER, REGENT OF BUSTOGNE: What could we say about this less than human piece of trash? He's a pervert (he drools at the idea of having a Fatima to abuse), a coward capable of running after two people on foot with three Mortar Heads, and a petty tyrant. Sopp, tired of being pestered by such a bug, fries him with the Knight of Gold's Buster Launcher. He is missed by no one.

AISHA CODANTE

AISHA CODANTE F.E.M.C. #2, MIRAGE KNIGHT: The leader of Amaterasu's personal guard, Aisha is also one of the emperor's best and most trusted friends. She often impersonates him when he assumes his Ladioss Sopp identity. She has been in love with him for years and heart-broken by his choice of Lachesis.

LITORA

LITORA: She was Amaterasu's first wife (he's now married to Lachesis) and Queen of the A.K.D. The emperor loved her deeply and she often appears to him in times of crisis. Although we do not know what caused her death, her memory is very alive in his heart. When she appears to him, she always looks like an angel.

FALK U. ROGNAR

FALK U. ROGNAR: King of Babylon and one of Amaterasu's most trusted allies, Rognar is also F.E.M.C. #4 and a powerful swordsman. According to our information, the Rognar seen in FSS is a clone of the first Rognar, long since dead. His Fatima is Ballanche Fatima #7, Eatta. He presently pilots a customized Led Mirage Mortar Head named Babylon Mirage. He was seen in one of Nagano's first works, a manga called "Fool for the City." His role in this manga is not clear. He does not appear in the movie.

Resource Campaign Online 5/15/17

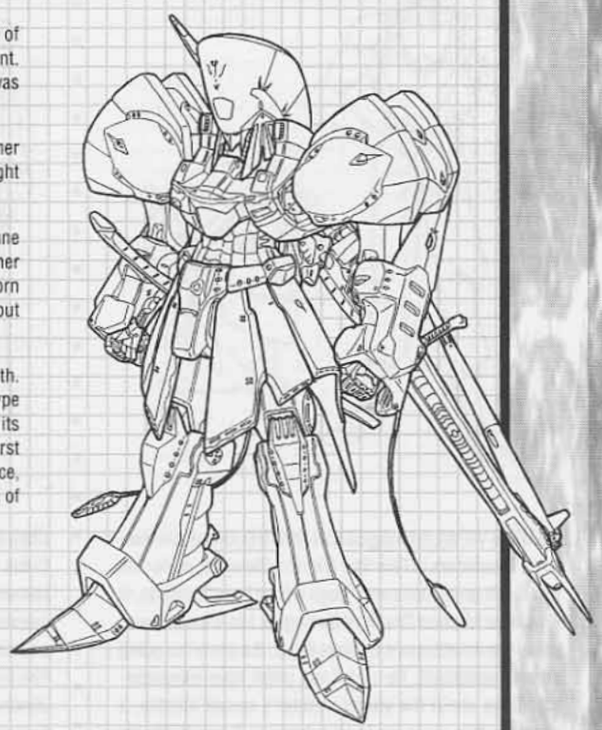
A.K.D. (AMATERASU KINGDOM DEMESNES) KNIGHT OF GOLD:

A.K.D. (AMATERASU KINGDOM DEMESNES) KNIGHT OF GOLD: The most powerful of all Mortar Heads (keeping exception of the Jünchoon), the Knight of Gold (K.O.G.) was also the first Mortar Head to mount a Buster Launcher as standard armament. The Mortar Head-sized Buster Launcher was a creation of King Colus III, but his friend Ladioss Sopp, creator of the K.O.G., was the first to put it to use in the Joker star system (on planet Addler to be precise) in the year 2989.

The K.O.G. is the result of a promise to the then very young Ballanche Fatima #44, Lachesis. After telling Sopp of one of her visions, where the young Meister came to save her in a huge gold-colored Mortar Head, Sopp set to work and with the Knight of Gold made her vision become reality.

As its name indicates, the K.O.G. is entirely covered with gold, an exploit that isn't beyond Sopp's talent and Amaterasu's fortune (by the way, Sopp and Amaterasu are the same person; this is explained in the Character guide). Beyond its color, the other distinctive traits of the K.O.G. are its head and Buster Launcher. Its enormous head has the basic shape of the head dress worn by orthodox priests and is covered with inscriptions and delicate engraving—the entire Mortar Head is covered with those but the ones on its head and shoulders are the most apparent.

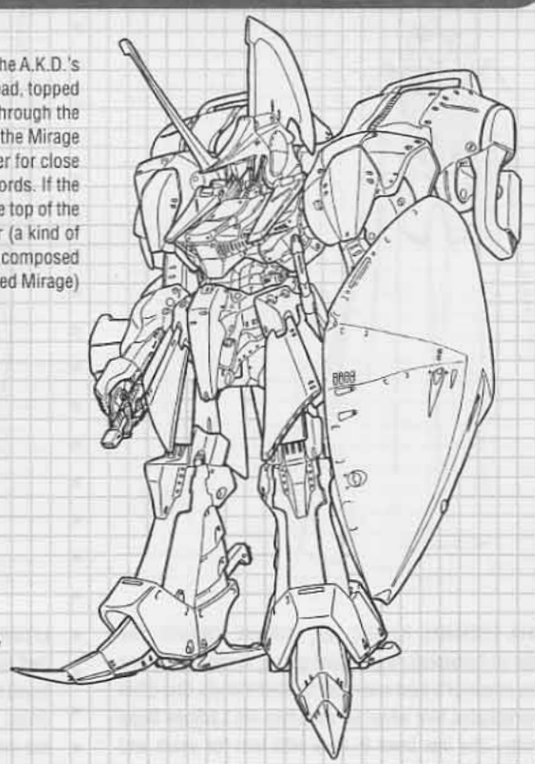
The Buster Launcher is installed on an articulated mount on its lower back and is folded in two because of its immense length. The later type Mortar Head-sized Buster Launchers are not mounted on the mecha and do not need to be folded. The prototype of the K.O.G. is the Water Dragon, also known as Knight of Chrome or Schpeltor. In 3100, the K.O.G. was partly modified to its Joker 3100 form (mostly the head and Buster Launcher mount). According to the translation, it seems that the F.E.M.C. (First Easter Mirage Corps) principal Mortar Head, the Led Mirage, was loosely based on the K.O.G. To operate at peak performance, the K.O.G. needs Lachesis (Ballanche Fatima #44) as Fatima and Sopp (Amaterasu) as pilot. The only combination capable of beating this trio is the combination Colus VI/Clotho/Jünchoon. Only the end of the saga will tell if this is true.



Name: Knight of Gold AKD 1001 Mirage D
Serves: Amaterasu Kingdom Demesnes
Meister: Ladioss Sopp (Amaterasu No Mikado)
Control system: Fatima type/Lachesis Fenatic B
Height: 15.0 meters
Weight: 144.8 tons
Armor: alloy with solid gold covering
Engine: Ezlazer type with photon reactor
Power: 3 trillion Hp at full combat mode
Armament: 1 deployable Buster Launcher, 35 S-mines, many antipersonnel MG's, 2 heat swords katana type
Capabilities: teleportation (Fatima necessary), space flight

F.E.M.C. (FIRST EASTER MIRAGE CORPS) LED MIRAGE:

F.E.M.C. (FIRST EASTER MIRAGE CORPS) LED MIRAGE: The Led Mirage is the principal Mortar Head used by the A.K.D.'s Mirage Knights. It is loosely based on the Knight of Gold. The Mirage's most recognizable trait is definitely its head, topped with a large blade that looks like the crest of classical Greek helmets and a long, thin heat blade that can cut through the best armor. The rest of the body is very similar to the Knight of Gold's. One of the most important systems on the Mirage is its veil (or shield), equipped with an extra engine and two enormous, deployable heat blades forming a pincer for close combat. The rest of the close combat armament is composed of two beam sabers or two katana type heat swords. If the situation asks for it, the pilot can eject the extra armor installed on the skirt and the laser deflecting plates on the top of the torso to make the MH lighter for better maneuverability. A full armor version, equipped with a flame launcher (a kind of plasma cannon) and an enormous reservoir on its back, is used in the later part of the story. The Mirage line is composed of the Jagd Mirage, Rouge Mirage, Cross Mirage, Led Mirage, Babylon Mirage (Falk U. Rogner's customized Led Mirage) and probably some others. The Led Mirage is entirely white and metallic with red trim.



Name: Mirage B Led Mirage First Easter Mirage Corps
Serves: Amaterasu Kingdom Demesnes
Pilot(s): Mirage Knights
Meister: Ladioss Sopp (Amaterasu No Mikado)
Control system: Headliner, Fatima, Mortar Head
Height: 15.2 meters (18.7 meters with head blades)
Width: 9.5 meters
Weight: 175 tons (with full armor pack), dry weight: 112.7 tons
Armor: Neoxin
Engine: Ezlazer type and secondary generator (veil)
Standard power: 1,2 billion Hp
Full combat power: 2,3 trillion Hp
Body armament: 2 beam swords or katana type heat swords, 1 heat blade (head), 2 power-launchers (forearms), 12 S-mine launchers, various small caliber antipersonnel MG's / Veil (shield) armament: 1 Heat Pincer, 2x350mm rocket launchers, 8x120mm rocket launchers, 2x180mm laser launchers, 4x75mm laser launchers
Full armor: 1 Flame Launcher (4,345 liter plasma tank), 1 armor pack (skirts, forearms, etc.)
Capabilities: full flight (space), teleport

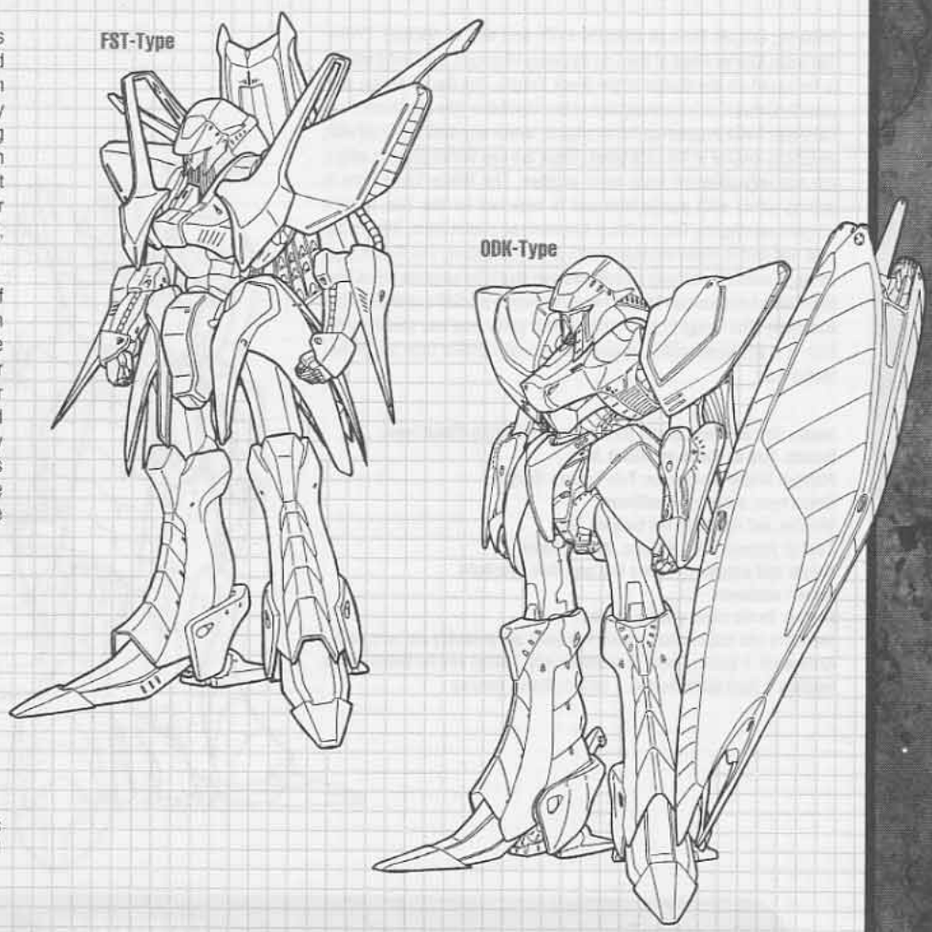
Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

SYMBOL OF COLUS JÜNCHOON:

SYMBOL OF COLUS JÜNCHOON: The Jünchoon was designed by King Colus III, who is one of the rare Headliners to be meister at the same time. It is based on the Berlin used by the Trio Temple knights serving the Trio de Colus on planet Juno. We see two Jünchoons in Five Star Stories. In Book 2 of Destiny Three Fates, we see the First Sally type, which is equipped with a big flightpack and a rather small shield (compared to the Later type). This version was proved under-powered, mounting a souped-up Berlin engine that just couldn't give the mecha the necessary power to defeat a Boowray Mortar Head that seriously damaged it. Morard Fatima Uricul, Colus III's first Fatima, gets killed during this engagement.

A few months later, Colus started repairing the machine with the help of Ladioss Sopp. The influence of the young Meister was salutary, for the Berlin class engine was replaced with an Ezlazer engine. Many components were installed, such as a more compact flight pack, better armor, a much bigger shield and a Buster Lance, which is a portable but non-structural Buster Launcher (as opposed to the K.O.G.). This Jünchoon was badly damaged during a fight against a Nue Sytriss Knights "Siren" Mortar Head piloted by Vraglo Kentauri. Colus got killed and after the battle, the Jünchoon was hidden somewhere (along with Ballanche Fatima #45 Clotho), waiting to be needed again. The Jünchoon's color is pearly white with black trim for the First Sally type and green trim for the Late type.

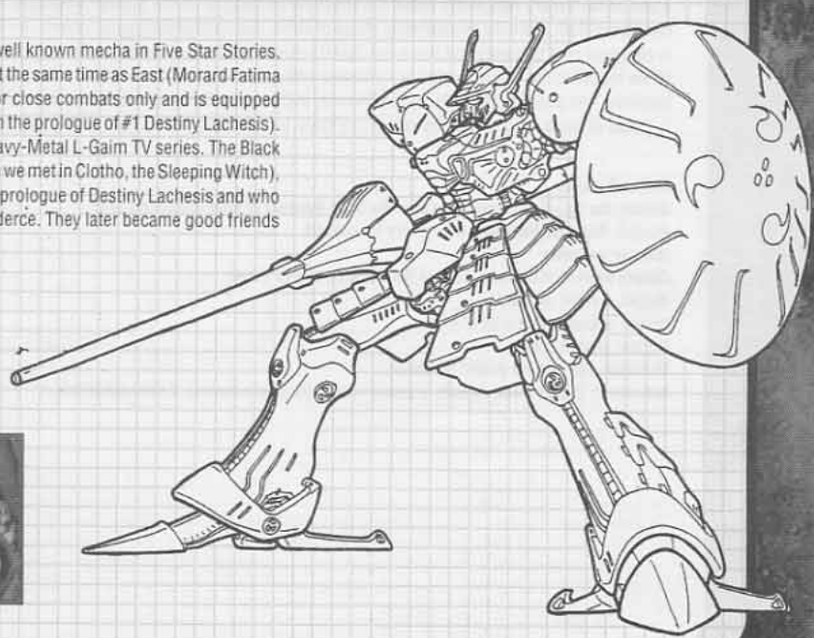
Name: Jünchoon, Symbol of Colus
Serves: Trio de Colus
Pilot: Colus III (XXIII)
Meister: Colus III (XXIII) (with help from Ladioss Sopp for Late type)
Control system: Fatima type (Morard Fatima Uricul for First Sally type, Ballanche Fatima #45 Clotho for Late type)
Height, weight: unknown (probably higher than the K.O.G.)
Armor: Unknown
Engine: Ezlazer type
Power: unknown (probably more than the K.O.G.)
Armament: 1 Buster Lance (Late type), 2 beam swords, 2 power launchers (forearms), 2 heat blades (forearm), many S-mines, many antipersonnel MG's, 1 veil shield
Capabilities: full flight, teleport, space flight



VATSHU, THE BLACK KNIGHT:

VATSHU, THE BLACK KNIGHT: The first Mortar Head we see in the movie, it is one of the very well known mecha in Five Star Stories. Although it somehow looks like a Berlin, the Black Knight is a much older design and was created at the same time as East (Morard Fatima #1). The two of them have never been separated since. Tall and slender, it is a machine made for close combats only and is equipped with an enormous round shield (which is replaced by a square one in the Late version that we see in the prologue of #1 Destiny Lachesis). Its head has two horns; its design was heavily influenced by the heavy-metal Batshu from the Heavy-Metal L-Gaim TV series. The Black Knight has had or will have five pilots, in the following order: Suly Paridor, Roados Dragoon (whom we met in Clotho, the Sleeping Witch), Decors Weissmel (from Destiny Lachesis), Buntline Gore and Sir Grard Sydmian (who dies in the prologue of Destiny Lachesis and who seems to be the last Black Knight). The original temple of the Black Knights was on Kalamity Goderce. They later became good friends of the Colus Dynasty of Juno. Obviously, the name of the Black Knight echoes its color.

Name: Vatshu, the Black Knight (or Black Guard)
Serves: Trio de Colus on Juno
Pilot(s): By order of service: Suly Paridor, Roados Dragoon, Decors Weissmel, Buntline Gore, Sir Grard Sydmian
Meister: unknown
Control system: pilot, Fatima, Mortar Head
Height: unknown (probably close to the Jünchoon's)
Weight: unknown (probably same as Berlin MH's)
Armor: unknown
Engine: Ezlazer type
Standard, full combat power: unknown
Armament: 1 Buster Lance (Late type only), 2 beam swords, 1 veil
Capabilities: teleport

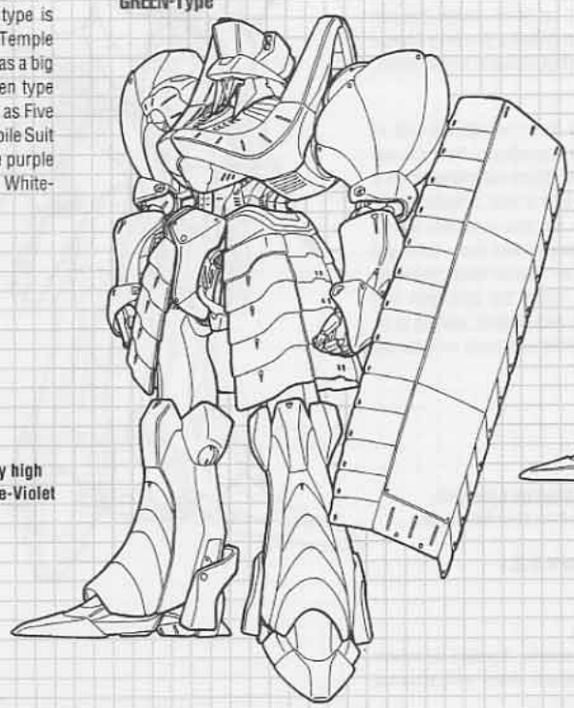


Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

TRIO DE COLUS BERLIN (GREEN TYPE AND WHITE-VIOLET TYPE):

TRIO DE COLUS BERLIN (GREEN TYPE and WHITE-VIOLET TYPE): The main Mortar Head of the Trio de Colus kingdom, the Berlin seems to be based on the design of the Black Knight. The Berlin design was used by Colus III in his conception of the Jünchoon (the Jünchoon First Sally type had a souped-up Berlin engine, which was later replaced with an Ezlazer engine in the Late type). There are two Berlin designs which are not very different from each another. The White-Violet type is entirely white with purple trim and is reserved for the Trio Temple Knights serving the Trio de Colus Kingdom on planet Juno. It has a big oval veil and is often equipped with a Buster Lance. The Green type Berlin is used by ordinary Headliners and could be considered as Five Star Stories foot soldier Mortar Head (similar to the GM's in Mobile Suit Gundam). The Green type is entirely dark green and has some purple trim. It is equipped with a square shaped veil, smaller than the White-Violet type.

Name: Trio de Colus Berlin (Green type and White-Violet type)
Serves: Trio de Colus on planet Juno
Pilot(s): White-Violet type: Trio Temple Knights;
Green type: ordinary Headliners
Meister: not specified but built on Juno
Control system: pilot, Fatima, Mortar Head
Height and weight: unknown but less than Junchoon
Armor: unknown
Engine: Berlin class photon reactor
Standard and full combat power: unknown but probably not very high
Armament: 1 Buster Lance, 2 beam swords, 1 large veil for White-Violet version; 1 heat blade sword, 1 veil for Green version



BOOWRAY:

BOOWRAY: One of the most intimidating Mortar Heads in Five Star Stories, the Boowray is used by a unit of mercenary Headliners called the Rainbow Boowray or in the popular language, the Grim Reapers of Both. Covered by enormous plates of armor and painted with garish colors, the Boowray is equipped with two veils and two triple-barrel power launchers mounted on the shoulders. Each of the mecha in the unit is painted in a different color and each has its own code name, like Yellow Boowray, Red Boowray, etc. We see the Boowray in Clotho the Sleeping Witch Part I and once in Part II. Colus III has a lot of problems with those guys, but Jünchoon takes care of them in the end.

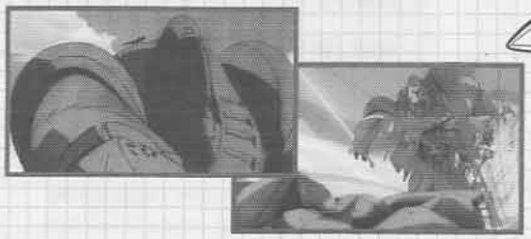
Name: Boowray
Serves: the Rainbow Boowrays a.k.a. the Grim Reapers of Both mercenary unit
Pilot(s): Rainbow Boowrays mercenary Headliners
Meister: unknown
Control system: Headliner, Fatima (low grade), Mortar Head
Height, weight: unknown
Armor: unknown (but a lot of it!)
Engine: photon engine
Standard, full combat power: unknown
Armament: 2 heat blade swords, 2 power launchers (triple-barrel), 2 veils (shields)

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

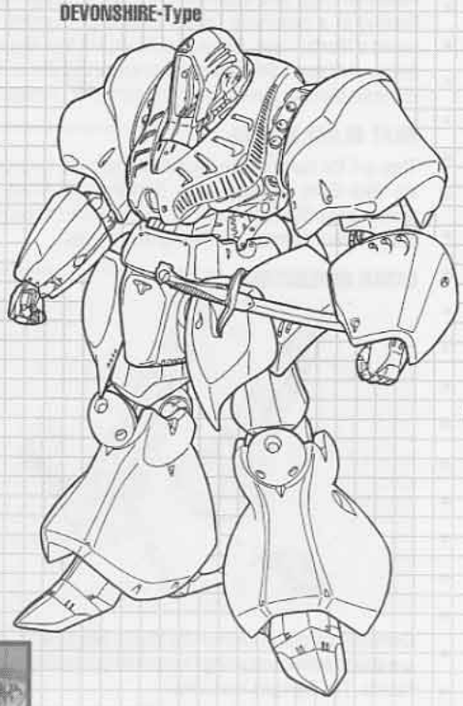
DEVONSHIRE, BALLANSHIRE:

DEVONSHIRE, BALLANSHIRE: Although those two machines look rather different, their structure is in fact very similar. Their most obvious difference beside the colors (dark brown for Devonshire and purple and gold for Ballanshire) is the head. The Devonshire head looks like the hood of a monk robe (reminiscent of Star Wars' Jawas) whereas the Ballanchire's is a near replica of the Rodd's Knights head dress. They have no veils; neither are they controlled with the help of a Fatima. Since they are a rather old design, they use an Etriml, an alien life-form bred especially to control Mortar Heads. Those two mechas get trashed by the Knight of Gold in the first installment of Five Star Stories.

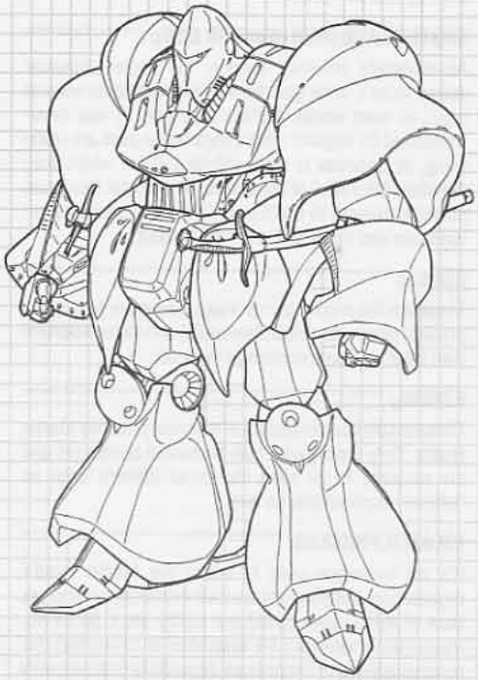
Name: Devonshire and Ballanshire
Serve: Bustogne, on planet Addler
Pilots: Devonshire: Trecora; Ballanshire: Weissmel
Meister: unknown
Control system: Headliner, Etriml
Height, weight, armor: unknown
Engine: photon reactor
Standard power, full combat power: unknown (likely to be low)
Armament: Devonshire: heat blade sword; Ballanshire: 2 heat blade swords



DEVONSHIRE-Type



BALLANSHIRE-Type



HELMINE:

HELMINE: The principal Mortar Head used by the Rodd's Knights of planet Addler, the Helmine seems to be an upgrade of the Devonshire and Ballanshire. It is a very old design controlled by an Etriml. The Helmine is a slow moving hulk and doesn't stand a chance against the more advanced designs used by the A.K.D. and the Trio de Colus. In the movie, the Helmine piloted by Uber of Bustogne is crimson. Nagano's color design sheets shows it to be white with blue trim. Uber's Helmine is destroyed by a blast of the Knight of Gold's Buster Launcher.

Name: Helmine
Serves: Bustogne on planet Addler
Pilot(s): Rodd's Knights (Uber of Bustogne in the movie)
Meister: unknown
Control system: Headliner, Etriml
Height, weight, armor: unknown
Engine: photon reactor
Standard power, full combat power: unknown (probably quite low)
Armament: 1 heat blade sword

Reymond P. Camblio (Order #33181348)

DICTIONARY

by Martin Ouellette

BEAM SWORD:

These are the same as the Beam Sabers in Mobile Suit Gundam. They are the hand to hand weapons most often used by Mortar Heads.

BUSTER LAUNCHER (BUSTER GUN):

An extremely powerful weapon, the Buster Launcher seems to be a warp gun (throws a dimensional warp at you!) or even worse, a black hole gun! It was never mentioned by Nagano what things those guns are really firing, as opposed to Heavy-Metal L-Gaim where they definitely fire a shell of some kind. Few Mortar Heads are powerful enough to wield one. The first Mortar Head to have one was the A.K.D.'s Knight of Gold.

DOREY:

These are the mecha transporters. There are two types: ground transporters (like Viewlard's) and air transporters (like Uber's). Some contain armament.

ETRIML:

These are the control system of the most primitive Mortar Heads. They are organic, non-humanoid computers and are rumored to be alien life forms (there's been no "official" explanations so far).

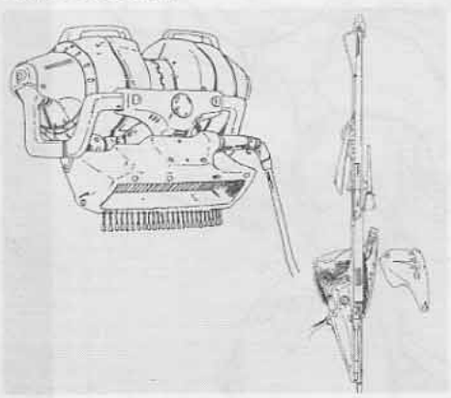
EZLAZER PROCESS:

It's the technique used to create the Mortar Head's organic core and give Fatimas their extraordinary abilities (lack of aging, great speed and agility, etc.). Some humans (like Amaterasu) are suspected of having had this process applied to themselves, regardless of its extreme danger.

FATIMA:

Humanoid-shaped biocomputers, Fatimas are used as control systems for the Mortar Heads. They are human in all aspects, except for three things: they can live a few thousand years, they cannot reproduce, and their agility and speed are incredibly high (they can run at 150 mph!). They are beautiful and stay young as long as they live. They cannot lie. Once they have chosen a master, they will serve him (or her) as long as he (she) lives. As far as we know, there are only two male Fatimas.

FLAME LAUNCHER:



This is a 30 meter long gun that fires a long burst of plasma that can burn through any armor. Since it is a type of flame thrower, it needs fuel. Called Liquid R, it is held in an enormous tank fixed on the Mortar Head's back. The Led Mirage is the only mecha that uses the Flame Launcher and carries it as part of the Full Armor package.

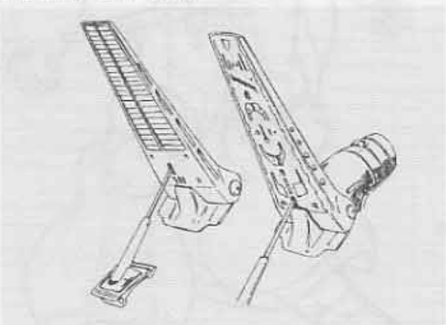
HEADLINER:

The Mortar Heads pilots. They often come from royal or noble families. They have agility and speed multiplied by 10 compared to normal humans. To be a Knight, a Headliner must first impress a Fatima (be chosen by a Fatima) in a ceremony called "unveiling". Second, he needs a Mortar Head. Some Headliners are free-lancers, but most of them affiliate with a Temple or country on one of the six planets. (See Temple Knight Roster on page 11)

HEAT BLADE SWORD:

They are the same as the Heat Axes and Heat Swords of the Rick Dom Mobile Suit in Gundam, but these are fancier and often resembles "katanas" (samurai sword). They come in human and Mortar Head sizes.

LASER DEFLECTORS:



Consisting of plates fixed on the Mortar Head's body, they are able to deflect incoming fire to protect the pilot and the Fatima. The Mirages have these.

LASER CUTTER:

The big blades fixed on the head of the Mirage line of Mortar Heads. They are modified Heat Swords.

MEIGHT:

The scientists who create Fatimas. The best in the Joker star system are Dr. Chrome Ballanche (creator or the Fatima Fates), Dr. Morard Carbyte (creator of Uricul and East), Dr. Prisen Corks and Dr. Steel Koop.

MEISTER:

Mortar Heads qualified engineers. These machines are very complex to create and require very competent engineers to do so properly. The best meisters whose Mortar Heads are renowned are Ladioss Sopp (creator of the Knight of Gold, Mirage line and many others) and Colus III (creator of Jünchoon Symbol of Colus, the second most powerful Mortar Head).

MORTAR HEADS:

Giant humanoid machines used in the Joker star system to fight wars. They usually measure from 15 to 20 meters but can be as high as 40 meters. The first Grand Head came to existence in the year 530 (Cluster Year) and the first real Mortar Head was the Machine Messiah in 2200. Each country and each Temple has its own style of Mortar Head. Any Mortar Head can think by itself and is capable of emotion. The most intelligent ones actually have a personality. Mortar Heads can "live" for centuries if properly maintained.

SPAUD:

Human-sized Beam Sword. Only Headliners and Fatimas are allowed to wear one.

VEIL:

Also known as SHIELD, they are usually loaded with extra weaponry (spare Beam Swords, missile launchers, etc.). The Led Mirage's contains an extra generator. There are many sizes and shapes of Veils. They are used in the same manner as the shields in Mobile Suit Gundam.

FEMC ORGANIZATION

The Mirage Knights hold a very important place in FSS as they are Amaterasu's bodyguards and special operatives. Here is a partial listing of the members of the First Easter Mirage Corps; during the course of the story some numbers are held by different persons, so you may note a few discrepancies in the list. It is to be expected when Nagano spend so much time changing the background to suit the current storyline!

FEMC #1 Deimos Haiaraki, Ballanche Fatima #1 Queen; commander FEMC, retired headliner. He used to pilot the Knight of Chrome.

FEMC #2 Aisha Codante, Ballanche Fatima #39 Alecto; see Character guide.

FEMC #3 Land Waund Sppacorn, Ballanche Fatima #41 Tisphone; he is a cyborg and looks like a small Mortar Head.

FEMC #4 Falk U. Rognar, Ballanche Fatima #7 Eatta; see Character guide.

FEMC #5 Grant Raymu; retired. Was once listed as KIA.

FEMC #6 Kuroikula Haiman

FEMC #7 Lie Ex, Ballanche Fatima #33 Icarus

FEMC #8 Spector, Fatima Potar

FEMC #9 Dr. Dippa Droppos, Fatima Achilles; headliner and meister, she possesses one of the few male fatimas.

FEMC #10 Hind Kill, Fatima Tieylea; one of the best knights, he constantly wears a mask.

FEMC #11 Leopold Chrysalis, Ballanche Fatima #17 Teata; a very traditionalist knight.

FEMC #12 Urazan Sie, Morard Fatima Pillet; punkish young knight, very annoying to FEMC #11.

FEMC #13 Poesche Nomien, Fatima Shealasta; one of Amaterasu's personal guards.

FEMC #14 Sharie Landers Krotenschuwanz, Ballanche Fatima #37 Aphrochune; sister to a Trio de Colus knight, she will become the AKD ambassador on Juno.

FEMC #15 Bjotorn Corlala, Fatima Spaluta

FEMC #16 State Ballo Kaiedia, Fatima Kalle

FEMC #17 Nu Sword Graphite, Fatima Patecia; like FEMC #3, wears battle armor because of battle wounds. Expert with twin spauds.

FEMC #18 Imara Lount Jajas, Fatima Solitaire

(According to current information, most knights with number above eighteen were not present until after 2988. Or at least in the present story...)

FEMC #19 Michelle Ha Lonn, Fatima Kclappa

FEMC #20 John Weinziel

FEMC #21 Allen Brafford

FEMC #22 Makusuharito Huoras

FEMC #23 Qukey, Fatima Aglaia

FEMC #24 Taitas Burei

FEMC #25 Uplanda Raymu, Ballanche Fatima #43 Atropos; he hasn't been around for long but we do know that he will take an important part in the story. There are numerous rumors about him.

FEMC #26 Mero Chrysalis

FEMC #27 Yotunma Pisutoiti

FEMC #28 Sotobato Syureskorhair

FEMC #29 Beritobal Godora

FEMC #30 Luto Codante, Ballanche Fatima #39 Alecto

FEMC #31 Upizome Baadenbaag

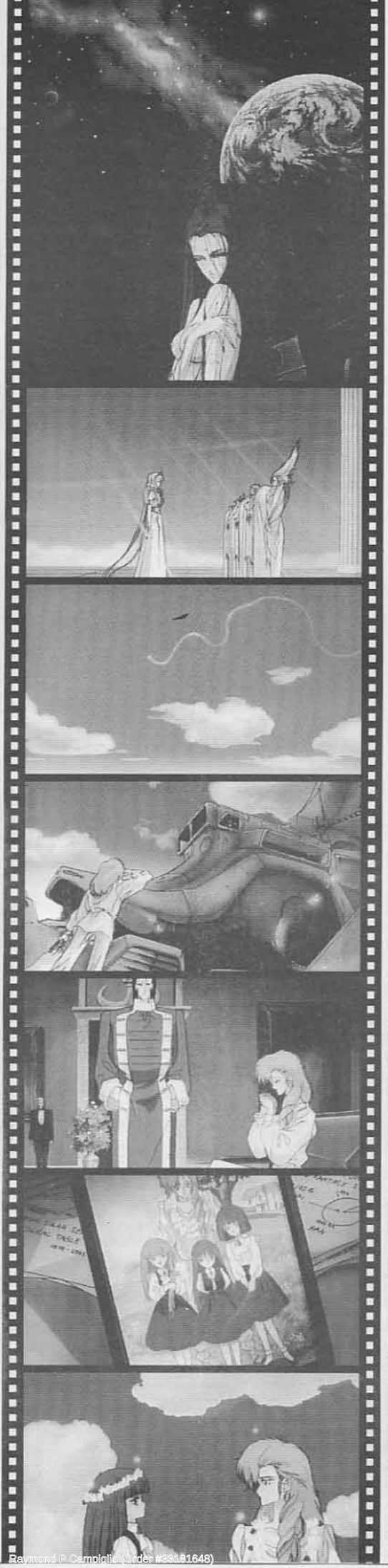
FEMC #32 Karel Chrysalis, Ballanche Fatima #17 Teata; in 3960 Sir Karel will be the leader of the FEMC, as we can see in the prologue of volume 1, "Destiny Lachesis".

FEMC #33 Arart Ex, Ballanche Fatima #30 Icarus

FEMC #34 Big Tori; non-human.

FEMC #35 Lady Spector; non-human.

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)



MECHA SYNOPSIS

FIVE STAR STORIES

reprinted from the AFO Newsletter by James Staley and Rich Arnold, submitted by Jeff Blend, edited by Marc A. Vezina

Five Star Stories Setting:

Five Star Stories takes place in the galaxy known collectively as the Joker System. The solar systems that make up the Joker System are Easter, Northe, Southern, and Wester. Each system has one major inhabited planet, or "Star". The fifth star is not a planet, but actually a comet named Slant which passes through the Joker System every 1,500 years. As with many societies, the passing of a comet is the herald of a major event. The planet Delta Belune in the Easter System is the primary star of the Joker Galaxy and the homeworld of the A.K.D. It is here on Float Temple that Amaterasu rules. Planet Addler is the sister planet in the Easter System. It is here that most of the story takes place. Dr. Ballanche lives on Addler. In the Wester System is the star Both. Juno is the name of the third star which is in the Southern System. The fourth star in the Northe end of the Joker System is named Kalamity Goderce.

Five Star Stories OVA:

In the Universal Stellar Calendar (USC) year of 2988, Dr. Chrome Ballanche completes the creation of his latest and greatest Fatima, Fatima #44 Lachesis. Before awakening from the Ezlazer Processing, she has a dream of the past: she finds Ladioss Sopp visiting Dr. Chrome Ballanche. When awakened from her capsule, she is reunited with her Fatima sister, Clotho (Ballanche Fatima #45). Suddenly the house is surrounded by Army troops and the girls are forcefully taken away.

In his home at Float Temple on the planet Delta Belune, Amaterasu No Mikado plans a trip to planet Addler for a very special event —the unveiling of two new Fatimas created

Raymond P Campiglia (Order #38181648)

MECHA SYNOPSIS

by the famous Dr. Ballanche.

The Knight of Gold, Ladioss Sopp's Mortar Head, plummets out of control. Ladioss is using it on its first test flight to go to Addler, and it isn't quite ready to operate without a Fatima: it crashes in the desert. With his Mortar Head downed, Sopp is forced to walk to the home of his friend Dr. Ballanche.

Sopp is quickly picked up by Voards Viewlard in his Dorey (Mortar Head transport vehicle). Voards explains that he is a freelance Headliner of the Tran Federation and has been hired by Uber, the Ruler of Bustogne (capital of Addler) to provide security for an upcoming Fatima impression. Many noblemen, kings and Headliners are coming for the ceremony and he wants things to go smoothly. Voards drops Sopp off near Ballanche's home and continues on to Bustogne, extending an invitation for him to stay at the palace should he make it to the ceremony.

Ballanche discusses his latest creations, the three Fatima Fates. Starting with Clotho, Atropos, and Lachesis, (three little girls Ballanche loves as his own daughters) they were created without the mind control device normally implanted within a Fatima, giving the three a will of their own. But now Clotho and Lachesis have been taken by Uber, who wants them for his own Mortar Heads. If during the impression ceremony they do not choose a Headliner Master, by default they become the property of their host... Uber.

Sopp asks about Atropos. "She woke up a year ago. I let her slip away quietly" Ballanche tells him. He then asks Sopp for his help in making sure the Fatimas get to proper masters. Sopp picks up a picture taken ten years ago of him and the three young girls. Remembering a promise he made to Lachesis, he says he will honor the Doctor's request.

Borrowing a vehicle from Ballanche, Sopp heads into Bustogne. The ship from Float Temple bearing Amaterasu arrives: it is the "Bella Karle".

Sopp presents himself to Uber, who is impressed with his reputation and offers him a position as his meister. Locked in Uber's palace, Lachesis and Clotho await their fate. Taking a break in the palace foyer, Sopp and Voards view the arrival of Amaterasu Des Grand Adas and four escorting F.E.M.C. Temple Knights. The beauty of Amaterasu contrasts sharply with the hideous "fade veils" worn by the Knights (fade veils are helmets made from the creature Lecaron, and gives the wearer the appearance of a death's head). Board suggests they take a break, and asks Sopp if he would like to see his Mortar Head, the Bulunge. Sopp is surprised that such a rogue would have a Mortar Head. A sudden disturbance interrupts their talk. Clotho has escaped her guards, gracefully leaping over a very tall wall and running away into the desert. Sopp and Board go after her (to help her to safety), giving chase at a mere 150 MPH! As a result of Clotho's escape, the guard around Lachesis is increased.

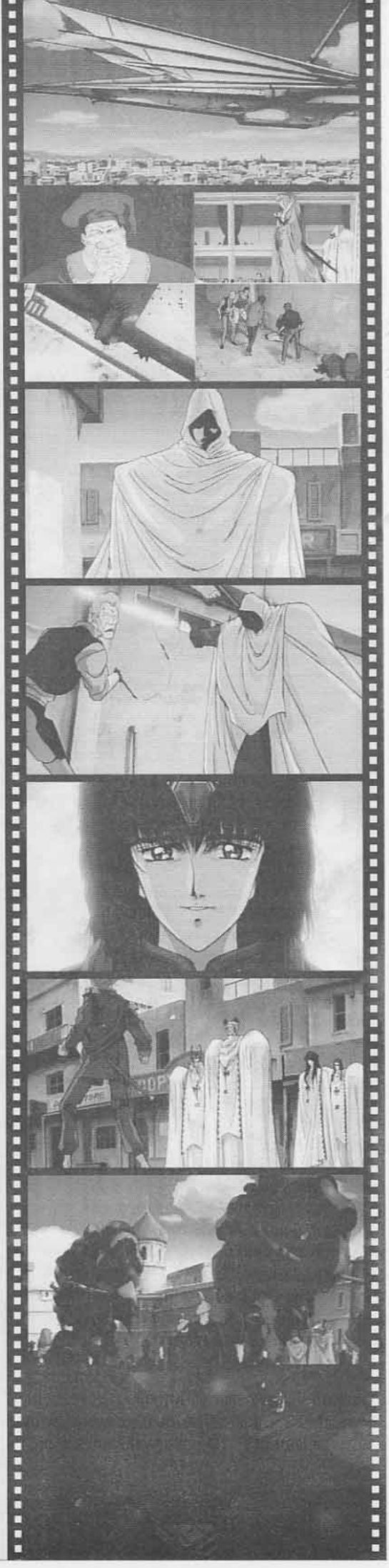
Clotho enters a small town, and is spotted by some troublemakers. "Hey, look. A Fatima! Maybe if we take her to a Headliner, we'll get a reward!"

They corner her in a small alley and one of them punches her. They never abused such a lovely girl before and they are obviously enjoying it very much. Before they are able to hurt her further, a mysterious cloaked figure appears. One man pulls a gun, only to have his hand removed by the lightning fast gesture of the now spaud-weilding person. Easily dispatching the rest of the gang, the man reveals himself to be King Colus III, ruler of the planet Juno.

Clotho sees a vision of him as her future master, Colus VI, and cries out "Master!" Colus kindly asks her to be his Fatima, which she eagerly accepts. Sopp is standing idly by, but Voards knows who Colus is and shows the proper respect to the king. The Mirage Knights, Sppracorn, Lee Ex, Poesche Nomien, and Nu Graphite witness the improvised "impression" of Clotho.

Suddenly the street is filled with soldiers from Uber's household. Byoit, captain of the Palace Guards, asks for Clotho's immediate return. Sppracorn coldly informs him that her impression has already taken place. To be valid, an impression must be witnessed by four knights and since Viewlard is a Headliner, five knights have witnessed the ceremony. Byoit is greatly upset by this, but manages to ask if they and Colus will at least remain for the impression of Lachesis.

Uber is even more upset by the news. In a show of power, he brings in his three Mortar Heads. They are introduced as Helmine (lead suit), Ballanshire (triangle face), and



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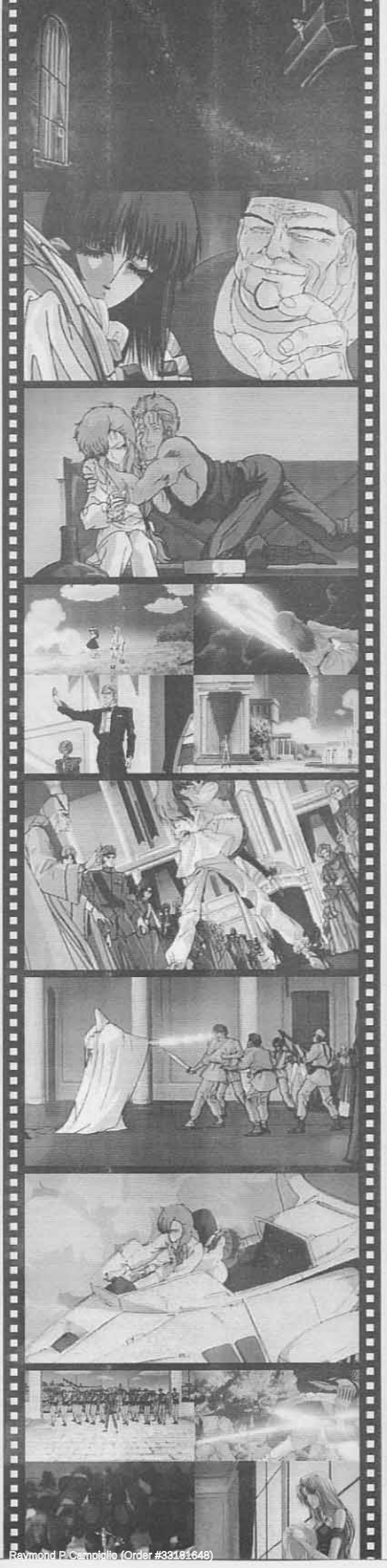


MECHA SYNOPSIS

Devonshire (sunken face). Uber challenges Colus to show the people how well his Fatima works. Clotho tugs at his arm and tells him that she dislikes and fears Mortar Heads. Colus is shocked by the news of a pacifistic Fatima, and declines the offer.

"Perhaps another time."

"This is the way a Headliner talks." challenges Uber loudly.

Amaterasu relieves the building tension by asking Uber for a demonstration of his machines. Later Viewlard and Ladioss are examining Uber's Mortar Heads and in doing so make an interesting discovery. They are equipped with EtrimIs; a low-grade, non-human substitute organic computer used in the place of Fatimas. Uber obviously wants the Fatimas for their superior abilities and power.

That night, Sopp and Lachesis look across the courtyard and see each other for the first time in ten years. Her joy at seeing him is cut short as a very drunk Uber enters the room and clumsily tries to abuse her. Only his weakened condition saves her. Sopp talks to Dr. Ballanche again, but is still indecisive on what to do. As he passes Amaterasu outside the house he tells him, "That will do you no good." Voards has followed his pretty friend to the doctor's home, and now doubly suspicious of him asks, "Who are you, anyway?"

"Ladioss Sopp" is the reply. "Who are you?" inquires Sopp.

"I am Voards Viewlard" comes the equally suspicious reply.

They go back to the transport, where the drunken Board gets amorous and tries to seduce his guest (believing him to really be a girl in disguise). Ladioss says that he is indeed a man, but Board is just too drunk and thinks his friend is too pretty to leave alone, much to Sopp's dismay.

As Sopp showers, he reminisces about the three sisters, now Fatimas, whom he met when they were only children. The young Lachesis had taken a special liking to Sopp, and knowing she'd become a Fatima someday, asked him to be her master when that time came.

"I want you to build me a Knight of Gold. When you become my master, we will be married in front of it."

In the night, Sopp is visited by the spirit of his first wife, Litora. She advises him to take action on Lachesis' behalf, rather than letting someone else decide her fate.

It is the day of Lachesis' impression. She is introduced to the crowd by Board, who is acting as Official Retainer, to record with whom the Fatima is paired. Lachesis meets all of the Headliners present but none suit her, not even the great Amaterasu. Board asks if she had chosen someone who is not present, but sadly she shakes her head no.

Meanwhile, Ladioss Sopp has turned his back on the proceedings and is leaving the city when Litora appears to him again.

"Are you running away again? Could it be that you do not want to admit that you are in love with a Fatima? You like to play with the feelings of others, yet you fear the love of a Fatima."

Sopp is speechless as she delivers the striking blow.

"An artificial being and a cold-blooded man. I would have liked to see it."

Buoyed by her words, Sopp turns back toward the palace. Bursting into the hall he shouts, "Lachesis, come here!" Lachesis calls "Master!" and runs toward him. The enraged Uber, thinking the Fatima defective because she did not select a headliner master, orders Sopp and Lachesis to be killed. The persuing guards are stopped in their tracks by a hooded figure as the couple flee.

"This road is closed," the figure menaces. "Find another route".

The soldiers waste no time in complying. Lachesis and Sopp are escaping into the desert in an armed digg (a sort of jeep). Uber orders Captain Byoit to go kill Ballanche for all the trouble and humiliation his Fatimas have caused him. He then boards his air dorey and joins the chase after Sopp and Lachesis. Board is getting ready to leave in his transport when Colus approaches him and thanks him for his help. Colus knows Board Viewlard is actually Mission Routh, the true ruler of Addler. Board is disappointed that his disguise had been seen through, but Colus assures him his secret is safe.

Byoit and his troops arrive at Ballanche's home, only to find a contingent of Amaterasu's Temple Knights waiting for

Raymond P. Camobio (Order #33181648)

MECHA SYNOPSIS

them. The Knights make short work of the soldiers, and Land Waund Sppacorn takes great delight in personally killing Byoit in a very spectacular and gross manner.

Out in the desert, the chase continues as Uber deploys his Mortar Heads. The pilots are happy for a bit of target practice.

After Dr. Ballanche's estate has been secured, Amaterasu takes off his wig and reveals himself to be Aisha Codante, Head of the Mirage Knights and Amaterasu's most trusted friend. She tells Ballanche that she is in love with Amaterasu (AKA Ladioss Sopp), but knows he is in love with Lachesis. Ballanche apologizes for creating Lachesis, for he knows it will not be the only sad event to occur because of her.

Back in the desert, Sopp is getting frantic. "I know I left it around here somewhere!" Climbing to the top of a small hill, they face toward the coming onslaught. "Knight of Gold, it is time to wake up." With a crashing of sand and boulders, the gold Mortar Head rises majestically from the dunes, carrying Sopp and Lachesis in its enormous hand. Believing the machine heavy to the point of being ineffective, Uber orders his Mortar Heads to attack. They quickly find out just how effective the golden mecha really is, as it rips the head off one of its attackers and cuts the other in two in one smooth motion.

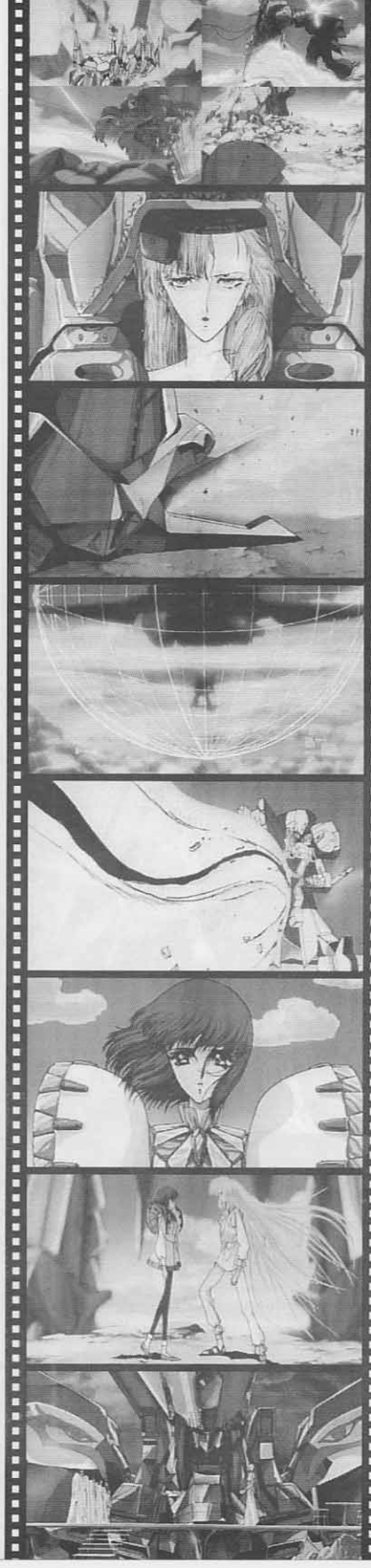
Believing he will be next, Uber orders the air dorey to fire its Buster Launcher. Sopp orders Lachesis to charge their own weapon as well. Although not as accurate as a normal Buster Launcher, their weapon is only half the size and therefore takes less time to charge. The Knight of Gold readies itself by anchoring its feet in the ground and lowering a polarized visor over its sensors. Sopp aims and fires. The resulting blast takes out Uber, his Mortar Head, the air dorey and a good portion of the surrounding desert as well. Climbing from the cockpit, Lachesis looks at their savior.

"You remembered! You made a golden Mortar Head for me just as you promised! "

Sopp's appearance now changes. Lachesis finds herself looking into the red eyes of Amaterasu Des Grand Adas.

"Lachesis. I love you, my lovely Lachesis."

Together at last, Amaterasu and Lachesis marry as the Knight of Gold watches over them.



Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

New Type

Hobbies and Toys

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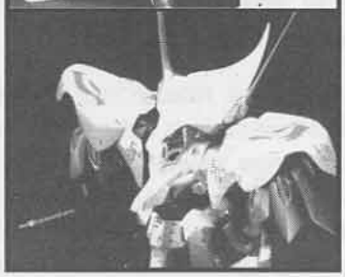

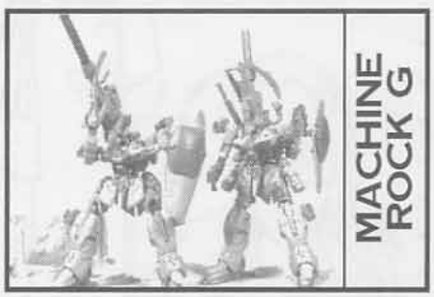

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NAGANO'S PREVIOUS WORKS

By Martin Ouellette

HEAVY-METAL L-GAIM

Although he is mostly known for his currently running masterpiece Five Star Stories, Mamoru Nagano has been involved in mecha animation design for years. The ones people remember the most are Heavy-Metal L-Gaim and the Zeta-Gundam part of the Gundam saga.

Developed cooperatively with Yoshiyuki Tomino (the creator of Gundam), Heavy-Metal L-Gaim was more or less a description of Nagano's inner fantasy world. When people read a synopsis of L-GAIM, their first reaction is usually: "But... But this is Five Star Stories!!" Yes, there is an immense resemblance in the two plots and when you see the mechas, it is evident that they are the work of the same artist (compare the L-Gaim and the Jünchoon "First Sally" type). The characters also strike a familiar chord. Daba Myroad's real name is Camon VI (as in Colus VI in FSS, and their physical resemblance is more than striking). The god emperor Amaterasu is a clone of Poseidal. And that's not mentioning the similarities storywise; they are endless.

A lot of readers will be astonished to know that FSS is, in Nagano's universe, the prologue of Heavy-Metal L-Gaim. This means that he began with the end! But again, the two stories are only linked by looks and similarities in plotlines. No one should consider them as one grandiose saga. Let's just say that they're related in Nagano's mind only! Or that Five Star Stories is Heavy-Metal L-Gaim the way Nagano would have wanted it done!

The Heavy-Metal: Although there are similarities between those machines and the Mortar Heads of Five Star Stories, the Heavy-Metals are quite different in many other respects. First of all, contrary to the Mortar Head, the Heavy-Metal (or HM) is not alive. In that aspect, it is much like the Mobile Suit of Gundam. Second: the cockpit of the HM contains a small hover vehicle called flicker which doubles as control seat. The L-Gaim and the L-Gaim MK-II have those while the other HMs often only have a kind of hover chair (flosser seat). And third, while the Mortar Head is bio-mechanical (with a brain, nerves, blood, etc.), the Heavy-Metal is built on an entirely mechanical frame called "movable frame", on which the armor is installed.

All the armament used by the Mortar Heads were already present on the Heavy-Metals, including the Buster Launcher, Five Star Stories' most celebrated weapon.

DABA MYROAD (CAMON VI):

OLDNA POSEIDAL:

DABA MYROAD (CAMON VI): **The son of planet Mizun's king Camon V, Daba was raised by Daba Hassar on planet Coam. With his son, Camon V had sent a Heavy-Metal (a Gayrham) which was modified into the L-Gaim. At the end of the series, Daba changes his name back to Camon Myroad and avenges his father.**

OLDNA POSEIDAL: **The king of the Pentagona system, Poseidal seems to be immortal. He is quite recognizable by his white hair and mismatched eyes, the right one being gold-colored and the left blue. He is a master of the bio-relation technique (a kind of regeneration) and has no qualms about using it to control people. He's also a Heavy-Metal builder and pilots the Original Auge.**

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

CAMILLE VIDAN:

PAPTIMUS SCIROCCO:

CAMILLE VIDAN: although a genius in Mobile Suit design, Camille has always been frustrated by his feminine name. Since he's easy to anger, he often does or says things he regrets later. He's a very good pilot but has tendency to go berserk in combat. At first, he pilots the RX-178 Gundam MK II, but soon switches to the MSZ-006 Zeta Gundam.

PAPTIMUS SCIROCCO: known as "the man from Jupiter," Scirocco is one of the most excruciatingly manipulative characters of Gundam. Under his languid and foppish manners, Scirocco is an extremely dangerous adversary. He's the creator of the first transformable mobile armor, the PMX-000 Messala. He also built the PMX-001 Pallas Athena, PMX-002 Bolinoak Sahman and PMX-003 "O".

ZETA GUNDAM

Released in 1985, Zeta Gundam was the much awaited follow-up to Yoshiyuki Tomino's Mobile Suit Gundam. In many ways, Zeta was much better than MS and boasted incredible designs for both its mechas and characters. Among the designers were Yoshikazu Yasuhiko (characters), Makoto Kobayashi (mecha designs) and a young guy who had impressed Tomino in an earlier project: Mamoru Nagano. As a general designer, Nagano designed some mechas like RX-178 MK II, RMS-099 Rick Dias and MSN-00100 Hyaku Shiki, and created the clothes for many characters, among them Haman Khan and Paptimus Scirocco.

Although the mechas for L-Gaim and Zeta are quite different, there is some resemblance between them. A good example is the Hyaku Shiki looking like the L-Gaim MK II in many ways. The MSZ-006 Z-Gundam also looks like the L-Gaim MK II and it even has the same transformation sequence!

The story of Zeta is centered on the events that follow the creation of Titans, a special brigade founded by a Federation official named Gamitov Heimann. This special unit was supposed to hunt down the remains of Zeon and then dissolve but Heimann had other plans. When the opportunity showed up, Heimann seized power and made Titans his tool to control both the Federation and the space colonies. With the help of Bosque Hom, he made life so difficult for the colonies that they revolted. Hom crushed them with operations like the "thirty bunch" during which Titans gassed 30 thousand protesters. Such acts forced some moderate Federation politicians to turn their backs on Titans and create A.E.U.G. (Anti Earth United Government). Its leader Blex Fora was soon assassinated. A.E.U.G.'s command passed to Quattro Bagina who turned out to be Char Aznable, the greatest MS ace ever known. Char was soon joined in his fight by Camille Vidan (the Zeta Gundam pilot), Brite Noa who had gone from White Base captain to shuttle captain and then became captain of the Aghama (flagship of A.E.U.G.), Emma Sheen (a young, disenchanted Titans pilot) and even Amuro Rey who had been Char's mortal enemy in the One Year War of U.C. 0079.

The war with Titans was fierce, as the A.E.U.G.'s young pilots had to fight adversaries like Jerid Mesa, the ace of Titans, Yazan Gable, a psychotic killer, and Paptimus Scirocco, a languid but extremely dangerous adversary. At the end of the series, the battle is joined by a third party named Axis. Led by Haman Khan, they mainly waited to see who would survive the war so they could hack them to pieces and take power. A.E.U.G. wins the war but the price is very high. They lose many good pilots like Camille, Emma, Katsu Kobayashi and even Char, who disappears at the end (his whereabouts are unknown). Unfortunately, war breaks out again and this time the adversary is quite a handful for the depleted A.E.U.G., as the remnants of Titans and Zeon join Axis to form Axis/Neo-Zeon. An extremely tough war awaits A.E.U.G. and little do they know that this time, it will be a Newtype war!

Raymond P. Campbell (Quincy, Illinois)

FRAMED!

A scenario for Mekton II

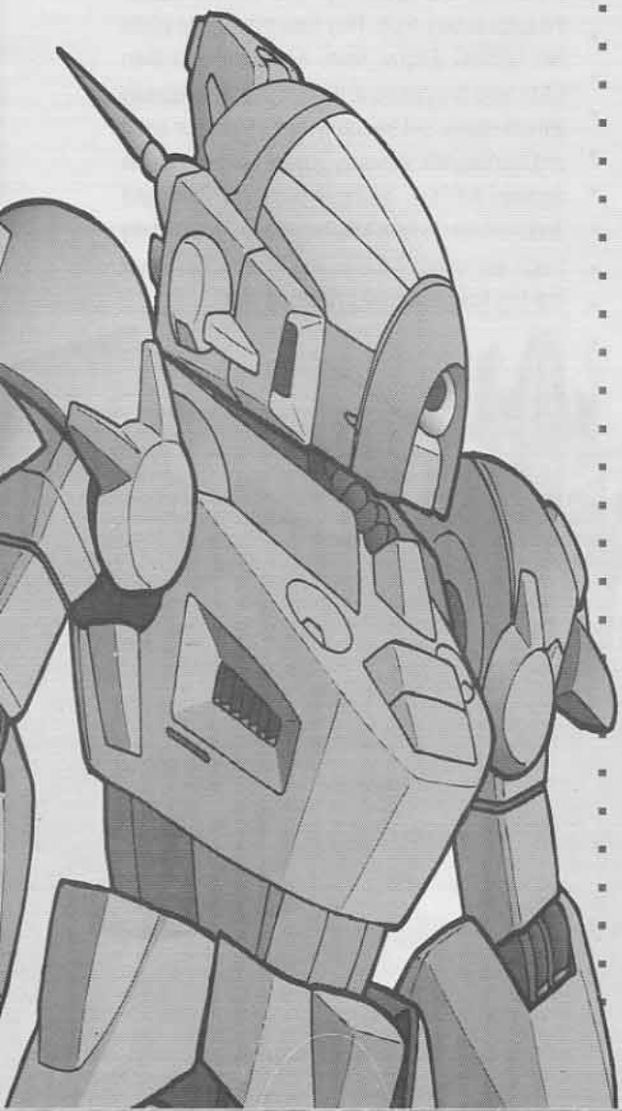
by Marc-Alex Vézina

Kevin Dex opened the cockpit hatch and threw down his flight helmet in frustration. His wingmen were already on the runway, discussing the battle. One of them approached Kevin's mekton: as he removed his helmet, a mane of blonde hair fell on his shoulders. Corporal Lauren Mesaya was a tall, slender woman, with a strong-willed attitude. As she paused near him, Kevin kicked the foot of his Vantage in frustration.

"It's the fifth time this month! And though I've seen it, I still can't believe it! They're getting tougher every day!"

"Cool down a bit, will you?" Lauren replied. "While it's true that we have a growing Kargan rogues problem, smashing your helmet won't solve the problem."

"You're right." There was weariness in his voice. "But, it's still..." he began, when he was cut off by a deep bass voice. Dave Lewis, the third member of White Eagle squad, interrupted Kevin like he usually did:



"Man, are these suckers tough! I mean, I practically emptied my missile pods to get them down, and even then they were pretty close to punching my ticket! Have they developped mind-reading, or what?"

The three of them burst into laughter at the idea of Kargan troopers straining to read the tactical thoughts of the squad in the middle of combat. It died soon enough when Kevin spoke again.

"Do you have any news on Carl?" he asked Lauren. She grew somber, as did Dave. She turned away and spoke softly.

"They still don't believe him. They keep saying that he was helping the rogues, that Professor Elal died because of him."

"But we know that's not true! Man, it just can't be!" Dave said. "I've known Carl for a long time, and he's incapable of doing anything like that. And besides, he's in love with April, the professor's daughter! He couldn't have let her father die for some gold!"

Kevin and Lauren agreed with a nod of the head. They remembered the night Carl's Vandal had come back alone, tattered and burned, the rumors that began, the day after when MPs found a pouch of gold hidden in his room, the accusations. Kevin knotted his hands into fists. "All of what's going on seems very wrong. I'm going to find out what's happening here, trust me!"

* * *

A broad-shouldered soldier opened the door of the cell to let Kevin enter. Carl was sitting on the bunk, slowly stroking the guitar he'd managed to bring with him. As he looked up, a brief smile showed on his face. "How nice of you to drop by. Excuse the look of the place, the decorator isn't coming until next week." Kevin smiled back at his friend's attempt at humor.

"Do you have any news about April?" the young prisoner asked. "I haven't heard from her since... since I came back from the mission." Kevin seated himself on the small bed. "No one has seen her since, either." he said. "The rumor has it she's off to her aunt's place in the north."

"That's not like her! She would at the very least have wanted to hear my side of the story!" Carl suddenly looked weary, as if reliving a nightmare. "I didn't abandon him. No one was supposed to know our flight plan! And then they just appeared, and we couldn't bring them down fast enough, and, and..." His voice faded. "You don't believe me, do you... Just like everybody else."

Kevin stood up. "I believe you. And I also believe you've been framed." He turned toward the door and knocked twice. "And I promise you I'll find who did it."

Carl let out a weak smile as Kevin got out and the door locked shut behind him.

* * *

"Excuse me sir, could I talk to you for a minute?" Commander Garath looked up from the file he was studying and made an affirmative gesture. Kevin entered the office and closed the door behind him. The young pilot seated himself and said "I'd like to talk about Carl Reynolds." The major closed the folder and put it back on the desk. He suddenly seemed concerned.

Kevin took a deep breath. "I think maybe Carl's been framed." A surprised look passed over the officer's face. "And what makes you think that?" he replied. "Well, nobody was supposed to know the flight plan. Professor Elal's trip was secret material, and if the mission hadn't turned sour, we low-ranks probably would never have heard about it at all." He shifted in his seat. "And I think that if Carl really was a traitor, we wouldn't have found the gold so easily. He's one of our aces, and he's not stupid."

The major leaned back. "It may surprise you, but that is what I was beginning to consider. While I have not been here for a long time, Carl does not seem to me to be a bad soldier. I am glad to see that I am not getting paranoid" He chuckled. "Or at least I am not the only one."

He stood up and went to the window. "Right now, all I can do is make sure Carl gets a chance to defend himself in a fair trial. But if you stumble upon anything that may indicate in a solid way that it is indeed a set-up, I will be behind you all the way." Kevin's face lit up. "Does that means I can investigate by myself?" Garath turned to face him and sighed.

"No. I said 'stumble upon', not investigate. I need all my pilots right now, and I cannot afford to let you loose." He paused before adding "I am sorry."

* * *

Kevin was still thinking about the discussion when his Vantage left the launchpad. Lauren's face appeared on one of the small monitors to his left. "Well, what did he say?" she asked. "I'm afraid it's a no-go, Lauren. At least we know he'll help us if needed." Kevin shrugged. "There's not much we can do about it, anyway."

A light on his control panel indicated that Dave was initiating communication. The second monitor winked to life, showing his wing man's face. "I've got a small problem with one of my arm actuators. Nothing serious, but d' you mind if we stop a bit? I could fix it, no time."

With Kevin's affirmative response, the mektons banked to the right and slowly settled down on a rocky ledge. Dave climbed up from his cockpit and walked to the shoulder, careful not to fall off the Vigil. He opened an access panel and peered into it, letting out a grunt. "Just what I thought..." He kicked the panel twice, and checked again. "Working now." Under the disbelieving gaze of his wing men, he returned to his seat and strapped himself back in.

The little stop had taken them off their normal flight plan so Kevin decided to follow a course that would slowly merge with the original. Little did they know it saved their lives.

The tracers filled the sky, but the skills of the squad spared them from the worst. "Take evasive maneuvers and engage! They were not expecting us from that side!" Lauren gave a burst of thrust to the left, launching her missiles while doing so. A Rampage exploded as the projectiles hit it in the center of its square torso.

Dave was spraying the jungle with beams from the Vigil's plasma rifle. A Kargan mekton tried to rush him but was swiftly cut down by the blast. Dave turned to engage another target, but the enemy lifted his gun again. Before he could use it, however, Kevin's mecha landed right on top of him, delivering a kick that broke the machine's back.

The battle was on. Kevin realized the only person who knew of their flight plan was... Commander Garath.

SCENARIO DESCRIPTION

Framed! is a scenario for a group of beginning Mekton players set on Algol soon after the Archipelago War. Sample characters and mecha rosters are included, but the story and setting as well as the forces in presence can be adjusted to fit in your regular game. The game can be role-played if desired, but the story is mostly an excuse to stage three mekton battles.

The scenario is divided in three parts, or "Acts". The players won't be able to repair their mektons or replenish their ammo bins between Acts, so careful timing is a must. All of the machines and props used in this scenario can be found either in the Mekton II rulebook or the Mekton Techbook. The gamemaster may require help to move the numerous enemy units during the battles.

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

ACT 1: THE AMBUSH

The first part begins immediately at the end of the short prologue story: the players are busy defending themselves against a Kargan ambush that almost worked.

The setting is a small island in the archipelago covered by thick jungle. The Kargan squad is entrenched in the middle of the map, two hexes between each unit. All mektons except the Mauler are facing the edge opposite to where the players enter. The Kargans have one free turn because of their ambush posture but since the players' squad do not come from the expected direction the Kargans are -3 on all rolls.

Once the players defeat the enemy, have them search the wrecks. One Kargan pilot is still barely alive, and manages to tell them this:

"You fought bravely... Guess I should have known that I wouldn't last long in this stupid line of business. Killing people is no way to earn a living... <cough!> Listen. I've done many bad things, and for once I'd like to... <argh> ...make things right. South-east of here you'll find a small convoy carrying Pr Elal and his daughter. Yes, they are still alive... but they...." Then he dies.

ENEMY FORCE:

- *1 Mauler, pilot I7, R6, C5, T5, L2, B.Type:strong, all mecha combat skills +4*
- *1 Rampage per player, pilots I6, R5, C5, T4, L2, B.Type:average, all mecha combat skills +3*

ACT 2: THE RESCUE

Same thick jungle, but with a few small mountains and a small dirt road. A convoy made up of four hovertrucks and two Deathstalkers is following the road, heading south toward the frontier. Elal and April are in the second truck: the players can detect their presence.

The players must defeat the two mektons before the convoy reaches the frontier (40 hexes away) and without harming the hostages. The Kargans won't endanger the trucks unless it becomes clear they will lose. Give the players a chance to prevent this, as Elal and April's survival is vital to the story. The crew of the vehicles are hired mercenaries who won't help either side. They've been paid to cross the frontier and that's all. If the players found the first act too easy, just add a couple more Deathstalkers (maximum two) to the convoy to keep them on their toes.

Once the smoke clears, Elal explains that he was kidnapped and Carl was framed for his supposed murder. The Kargans killed three birds with one stone: they gained a famous mecha designer (using April to control him); they did not have to hide him from the Elarans; and a famous Elaran ace would disappear. The only person who knew enough to organize such a daring plan was the base's mekton commander: Garath!

Kevin clenched his fists: "It's payback time!"

ENEMY FORCE:

- *4 hovertrucks (Mekton II p.30)*
- *2 Deathstalkers, pilots I7, R6, C6, T5, L4, B.Type:strong, all mecha combat skills +4*

ACT 3: THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

With Pr Elal and his daughter returning to an Elaran outpost with one of the trucks, the players hurry back to base to confront the treacherous commander. He heard the ambush failed and his cover is now blown. He's trying to make a run for it using a mekton concealed just off the grounds of the base.

This is the final battle. All the base's mektons have been disabled by a secret code implanted by Garath. Only the players stand between him and escape from justice. The fight takes place just outside the base perimeter, with a few houses and small buildings in the way. If possible, role-play the fight to the maximum. Be bold. Be heroic. Be anime.

Afterward, you can describe the reunion of Carl and April in as much detail as you want. After all, some people are more romantic than others...

SUGGESTED PLAYER CHARACTERS ARE:

Kevin Dex I7, R9, C7, T5, A8, L6, B.Type:average, MA6, all mecha combat skills +6, Mekton: EMA-108 Vantage

Lauren Mesaya I7, R7, C8, T5, A9, L6, B.Type:average, MA7, all mecha combat skills +5 (except Beam Weapons +7), Mekton: EMA-105 Vigil

Dave Lewis I6, R7, C7, T8, A6, L8, B.Type:strong, MA5, all mecha combat skills +6, Mekton: EMA-105 Vigil

Commander Garath I8, R8, C9, T6, L3, B.Type:strong, MA5, all mecha combat skills +7

Commander Garath has hidden his personnal mekton in the woods near the base. It is a standard Hellwing except for the ECM pod attached under the left wing. This enables the gamemaster to control the flow of the game and push his players to their limits; depending on how well they got out of the previous encounters, assign a value between 1 and 4 to the jamming system. This should be fair and keep the players on their toes until the very end!

Name: IMK-11e HELLWING
Tonnage: 79.6
Pilot Name: Garath

Ground MA: 8
Flight MA: 17
Maneuver Value: -3

Actions Bonus: +2
Scale: 1/1
CPs: special

COMPONENTS

Servo Location	Level	Kills	Armor	Type	SP
Torso	MS	7	MS	S	4
Head	MS	4	LW	S	2
R&L. Arms	MS	4	MS	S	4
R&L. Legs	MS	4	MS	S	4
R&L. Wings	S	3	SL	S	1
-	-	-	-	-	-
Powerplant	AH	1	-	Hot +2	-
Hydraulics	-	8	-	Standard	-

EQUIPMENT

Name	Kills	Game effects
Link	-	Wing missile pods
Verniers	-	+2 MV, 3 each leg, 2 each arm
Esc. Pod	-	Head, just in case...
Thrusters	9	3 RL, 3LL, 3T
ECM Pod	-	Sensor, Missile, value between 1-4
-	-	-
-	-	-

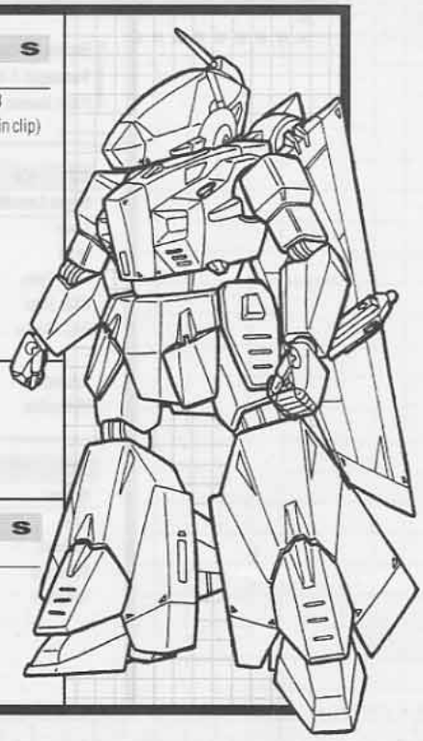
WEAPONS

Name	WA	Range	Kills/Dam	Shots	Loc	Special
JAC Rifle	+1	9	3/3	*	2 Hands	Machine Fire BV3
Ammo	-	-	-	5	R.Arm	(5 shots in gun+5in clip)
AP Ammo	-	-	-	5	L.Arm	Armor Piercing
AM Laser	+1	N/A	4/(4)	Inf.	Head	Anti-missile
Plasma Blade	+1	Melee	2/6	5	R.Hand	
BarrierScreen	-	-	8/0	1	Torso	Reactive PF 1
Missiles	0	10	2/2	8	L.Wing	1 Hex Burst
Missiles	0	10	2/2	8	R.Wing	1 Hex Burst
L.Hand	+1	Melee	1/1	-	L.Arm	Quick, Handy
R.Hand	+1	Melee	1/1	-	R.Arm	Quick, Handy

SENSORS

Type	Kills	Range	Comm	Loc
S	4	4 Km	800 Km	Torso
-	-	-	-	-

REMOTE UNITS



Raymond P Campagna (Quasi-Static)

AURA BATTLER

DUNBINE

NOTE!

When playing in the Dunbine universe, there are three small changes to the rules:

- First, since all ABs are in the ten ton range, multiply the weight by ten to calculate the MV and ground MA (see table in last issue);
- Second, the aura of the pilot is very important. No pilot with a PSY below 6 can operate Dunbine. This may vary depending on the Aura Battler model, however. The pilot can also add his PSY total to any MA, damage or SP stat once per game to represent the extra energy pumped out by the pilot;
- Third, anything coming from Byston Well into our world is nearly invincible due to the different laws of nature. This calls for judgment from the gamemaster. Watch the animation if you can.

These changes accurately allow you to recreate the Dunbine saga, but do not use them elsewhere as they affect game balance!

ADAPTATION FOR MEKTON

by Marc-Alex Vézina

Aura Battler Dunbine was a strange animation trying to please both the fantasy and the sci-fi fans. Taking place in another plane of existence (at first), it combined wild semi-organic mechas with sword-wielding characters in an epic adventure.

The Dunbine is the principal mecha in the first part of the story. Later, the hero (Sho Zama) gives it to Marvel Frozen and pilots a more advanced Aura Battler, the Billbine. Although the Dunbine is one of the earliest AB prototypes, it can still be a foe to be reckoned with!

The specs are fairly standard. The machine isn't very solid, but its pilot usually keeps it out of trouble. Like all Aura Battler, the armament is very melee-oriented. The Dunbine can mount an autocannon on each arm, but since it generally carried only one in the series, I chose to put the CPs elsewhere.

Name: Dunbine
Tonnage: 4.4
Pilot Name: Sho Zama

Ground MA: 10
Flight MA: 20
Maneuver Value: -2

Actions Bonus: 0
Scale: 1/1
CPs: 275

COMPONENTS

Servo Location	Level	Kills	Armor	Type	SP
Torso	S	6	LW	S	2
Head	SL	1	SL	S	1
R&L. Arms	LW	3	SL	S	1
R&L. Legs	LW	3	SL	S	1
R&L. Wings	SL	1	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
Powerplant	SL	6	-	Cool+2	-
Hydraulics	-	8	-	Standard	-

EQUIPMENT

Name	Kills	Game effects
Link	-	Talons
Verniers	-	+2 MV, MB
Efficiency	-	Verniers
Thrusters	3	1 space MB
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-

WEAPONS

Name	WA	Range	Kills/Dam	Shots	Loc	Special
Talon	+1	Melee	4/4	-	L.Leg	Quick, AP
Talon	+1	Melee	4/4	-	R.Leg	Quick, AP
Aura Barrier	-	-	7/0	-	MB	Energy Pool, Portfolio 2
(defence screen)	-	-	6/0	Inf.	-	PF 2
(offence screen)	+1	Melee	0/7	Inf.	-	AF 1
Autocannon	0	6	4/4	*	L.Arm	Machine fire BV3
Ammo	-	-	-	20	MB,Arm	Standard
Sword	+1	Melee	6/6	-	R.Hand	AP
L.Hand	+1	Melee	1/1	-	L.Arm	Quick, Handy
R.Hand	+1	Melee	1/1	-	R.Arm	Quick, Handy

SENSORS

Type	Kills	Range	Comm	Loc
S	4	4 Km	800 Km	Head
-	-	-	-	-

REMOTE UNITS

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

ADAPTATION FOR MECHA!®

by Marc-Alex Vézina

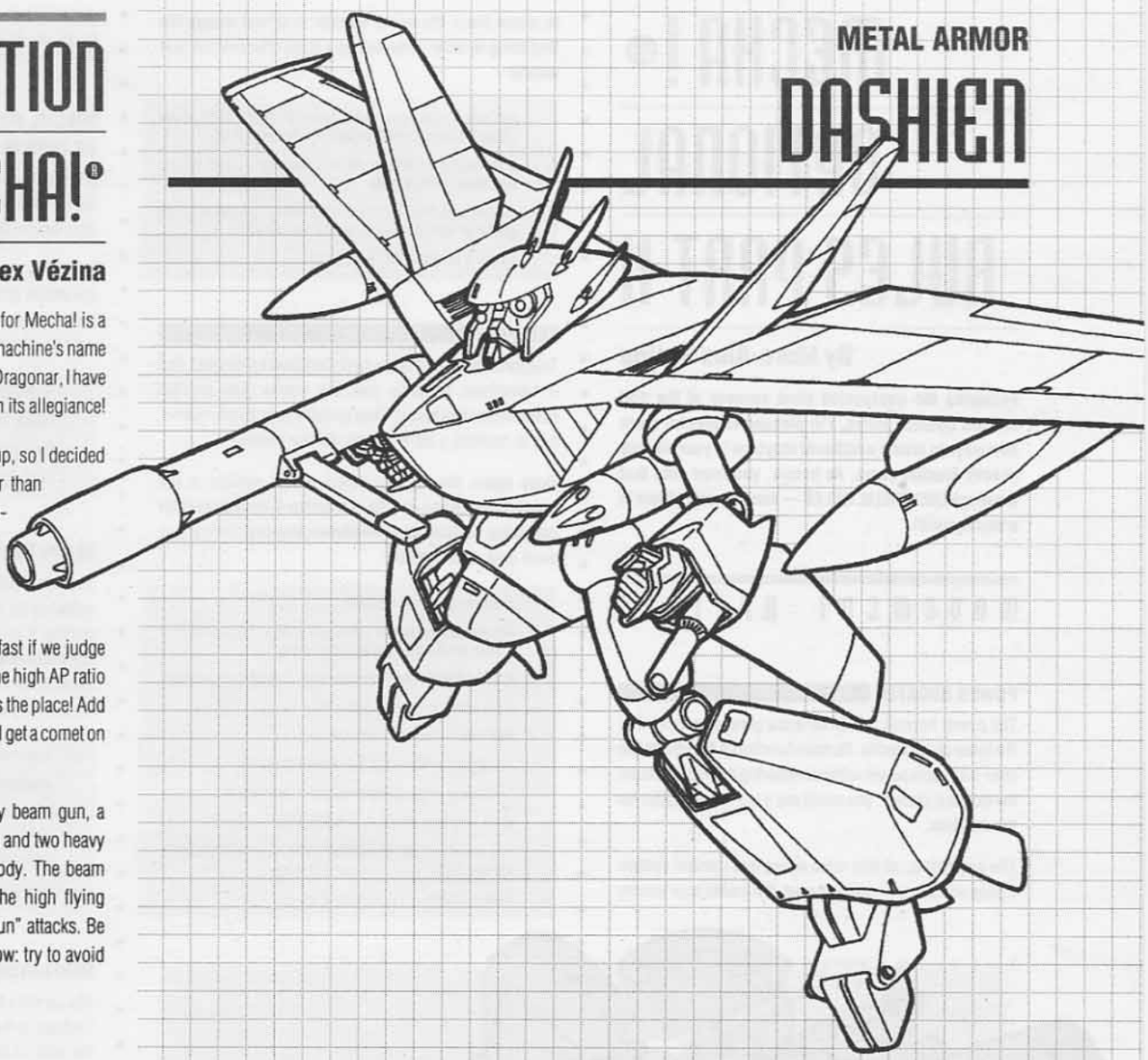
I must admit that this month's adaptation for Mecha! is a complete shot in the dark. Apart from the machine's name and the fact that it came from Metal Armor Dragonar, I have no idea what are its characteristics or even its allegiance!

Nevertheless it was just too cool to pass up, so I decided to base the specs on "playability" rather than accuracy. Since many of our past adaptations are in the heavy or super-heavy class, this one will be a mid, just to change things a little...

Obviously, the Dashien can fly, and very fast if we judge from the wings and general sleek lines. The high AP ratio and distance limits ensure it will zip across the place! Add the underwing boosters power and you will get a comet on your gaming table...

The armament consists of a high energy beam gun, a small repeating cannon in the left forearm and two heavy missile pods, one on each side of the body. The beam gun's long range, when coupled with the high flying speed, enables you to perform "hit and run" attacks. Be careful because the armor protection is low: try to avoid hand-to-hand combat.

METAL ARMOR DASHIEN



VEHICLE NAME: METAL ARMOR DASHIEN

Class: MID
Point Value: 400

System Integrity:

Regular Armor:

Heavy Armor:

	Hum	Sur	Aero	AP ratio
Gr	9"			3" / AP
Sk				-
Fl	30"			19" / AP

Force Screen: N
Shield: N
Force Shield: N
Number of crew: 1

WEAPONS / BATTERIES:

	Description	Damage	Range	ROF	# in Battery
W1	Beam Gun	3D6	50"	1	1
W2	Rep. Cannon	1D6	10"	2	1
W3	-	-	-	-	-
W4	-	-	-	-	-
W5	-	-	-	-	-

Hand Weapon: N
Hand-to-Hand Options:
Energy Weapon: N
C D

MISSILES:
# of missiles

Bay 1 -
Bay 2 -
Bay 3 -
Bay 4 -
Bay 5 -
Bay 6 -
# of pods
# of smoke pods

Hull Configuration: Humanoid

Other Abilities
Super. Man.

AMMUNITION RECORD SHEET

Booster Unit: Y
#1
#2
#3
#4

Bazooka: N

Grenades: N

HEAVY MISSILES
Bay 1 -
Bay 2 -
Bay 3 -
Bay 4 -
Bay 5 -
Bay 6 -
# of Pods: 2

HAMMER MISSILES
Bay 1 -
Bay 2 -
Bay 3 -
Bay 4 -
Bay 5 -
Bay 6 -
# of Pods: -

EMP MISSILES
Bay 1 -
Bay 2 -
Bay 3 -
Bay 4 -
Bay 5 -
Bay 6 -

INTERCEPTION MISSILE
Bay a -
Bay b -
Bay c -
Bay d -
Bay e -
Bay f -
# of Pods: -

Reproduce Campaign Quest Reliably

MECHA! OPTIONAL RULES PART II

By Marc-Alex Vezina

Following the unexpected blast success of the first Mecha! Optional Rules, I'm pleased to present more new ways to create additional mayhem in your already chaotic Mecha! game. As before, you must note that these are UNOFFICIAL RULES — don't try using them in a tournament!

MOVEMENT OPTIONS

POWER BOOSTER

The power booster is a small extra generator located in the torso of the mecha. Its main function is to provide the crew with extra power without requiring them to overload the existing system: you could say it is a second heart for the machine.

The problem is, all this extra wiring and coolant system makes an easy and inviting target. No matter how you try to armor them, the power booster is almost always the first thing to blow, often taking a good chunk of the suit with it!

- *the power booster provide extra AP at the start of the player's controling phase just like the regular SI;*
- *it is destroyed before the forcefield or screen on the Additionnal Effect table;*
- *if destroyed, it explodes on a roll of 4-6 on 1d6, causing 1d6 points of damage directly to the mech's SI;*

cost = 5 pts per 2 AP, max 10 AP.

TELEPORT

Teleportation systems are rarely installed on mechas, but it sometimes happens (see the mecha files on FSS elsewhere in this issue). They can add spice to your game, not to mention a lot of trouble for the enemy!

Once again, the specific nature of the system is not specified, allowing you to customize it to your current campaign. It could be a miniature space-fold device, or a warp gate. You decide!

- *once per game per system;*
- *the teleport system is destroyed before the forcefield or screen on the Additionnal Effect table;*
- *cost 1 AP to charge. The phase after, another AP to activate.*
- *once activated, roll on this table:*

Roll 1d6 (+1 per 15" moved):

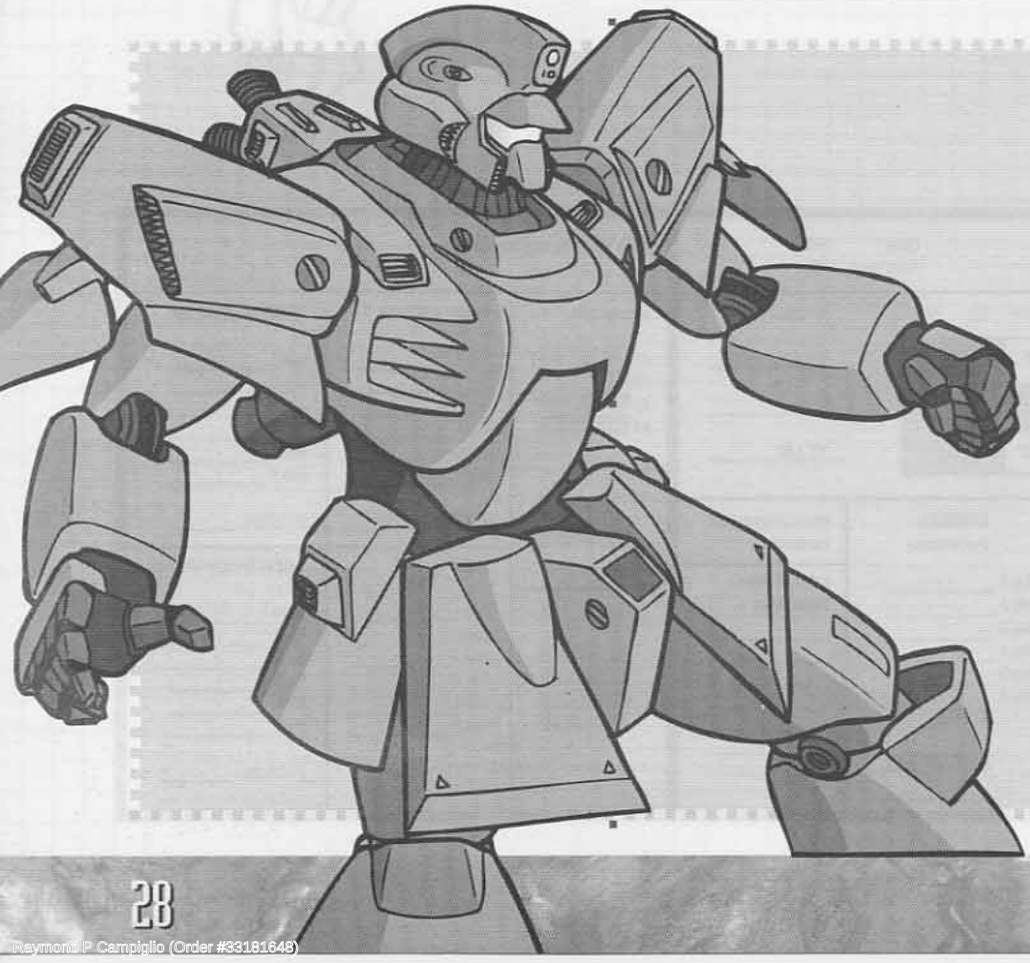
2-4 arrives at the designated point instantly;

5-7 arrives at the designated point next phase;

8-10 arrives at the designated point second next phase;

11+ arrives at the designated point second next phase, deviate 1d10";

Cost = 25 pts.



OFFENSIVE OPTIONS

SPECIAL PHYSICAL ATTACK WEAPON (S.P.A.W.)

[This particular weapon system was designed by Stephen Bierce, one of our collaborators. Expect to see more stuff from him in the near future!]

The S.P.A.W. is a generic system designed to simulate the effects of the many powersuit hand-to-hand weapons seen in anime (beam saber, knuckle bomber, etc); at least until Combat! is published...

- *used by powersuits only;*
- *Range 0" (close combat only);*
- *Damage: 1d3 (normal damage) per AP, up to 5d3;*

Cost = 5 pts.

RECON SYSTEM

The exact nature of the recon system is left somewhat nebulous so the players can use it in their own campaign setting. It is generally composed of enhanced sensors, high-definition radar unit and other electronic paraphernalia. It will mostly be found on small and nimble scout mecha who will replace part of their armament with it.

- *ignore all obscurements;*
- *impossible to ambush (all enemy position known);*
- *can transmit the data to one mecha per phase — must be in line of sight, mecha can ignore obscurement;*
- *can serve as spotter (see LR gun);*

Cost = 25 pts.

MINELAYER RACK

The rack is a special unit attached either on the back or on the legs of the mecha. It enables the pilot to lay mines in the path of pursuing opponents, or simply channel the enemy force in a trap.

- *each rack can hold ten mines maximum;*
- *each mine cost 1 AP to drop and cause 2d6 damage in a 2" radius.*
- *mine racks are treated like missile bays for critical damage purpose;*
- *mines can be set to explode on proximity (1") or on command — specify when releasing;*

Cost = 5 pts per rack, 1 pt for two mines.

LR GUN

The Long Range gun is an artillery unit designed to take out moving targets at extreme distance. A good example of an anime mecha using it is the YMS-16M Xamel from 0083 Stardust Memories: as you might guess after seeing the Xamel, the gun isn't exactly light or small.

Add to this a slow rate of fire, and you get a cumbersome monster who needs support if it's ever to survive a battle. But if you manage to keep it out of sight and into indirect fire mode, who knows?...

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

- *the gun imposes a penalty of -1"/AP because of its weight;*
- *takes one phase to charge, at a cost of 1 AP;*
- *it causes 4d6 damage, with unlimited range, ROF 1, cost 4 AP to fire;*
- *can fire indirectly with a -4 penalty. If the shot misses, it will deviate — see Targeting Terrain Features, p.14 of the rulebook;*
- *forward spotters can reduce the indirect fire penalty. Mecha need recon system, and powersuits can be equipped as forward spotter for 5 pts. Each spotter reduce the penalty by 1 pt, with two spotters maximum.*

Cost = 100 pts.

CALIFORNIUM BOMB

In the well-known OVA Gunbuster, the Machine Weapons (AKA mecha) carry a large energy lance and a californium nuclear bomb as sole armament. Even if Gunbuster is mostly a parody of the excess of Japanimation, I kinda liked the concept of having to put a bomb right in the enemy's face!

The bomb is a sure way to cause a lot of damage to terrain features and/or large teams of mecha. Assuming you can get to the enemy holding a highly unstable bomb, that is...

- *range 0", damage 5d6 with a 3" burst radius;*
- *the bomb is treated as a missile pod for critical damage purpose;*
- *it is inert in its transport state but must be activated by spending 5 AP to be used any phase therafter (it cannot be disarmed);*
- *once activated, the bomb is unstable and will explode if hit, causing the damage to the mecha holding it;*
- *a succesful grapple attack is required to attach it to the enemy -- once attached, it is command-detonated by the attacking mecha. Force fields give no protection. The target must roll a higher Grapple to get rid of the bomb;*

Cost = 5 pts.

DEFENSIVE OPTIONS

ECM POD

The pod is a small unit attached to the mecha which emits disruptive radio waves (radiations, Minovsky particules, whatever) to confuse enemy sensors and ruin their aim. It also exists in emitter form, which is a much bigger version of the normal pod.

- *pod gives +1 to all defense roll against ranged attack;*
- *negate the overwhelm bonus by confusing the missiles' computer guidance;*
- *emitter has same effect but on a 6" radius around the mecha. Friendly and enemy unit benefit from the effect if inside this sphere. Because of its bulk, cause a penalty of -1"/AP;*

Cost = 15 pts for pod, 30 pts for emitter.

ABLATIVE ARMOR

The concept for the ablative armor came from the Chobam armor worn by the Gundam NT-1 in 0080 War in the Pocket. I do believe the heavy armor is the official Mecha! equivalent of it, but I wanted something closer to the anime.

The ablative armor is just that: big plates that absorb the damage and then fall away, leaving the mecha naked (!) but relatively unharmed. Ablative armor points are like SI, except they can be jettisoned and give no AP.

- *each point of armor stops one point of damage;*
- *there is a penalty of -1"/AP for every six points or part thereof;*
- *Ablative armor can be jettisoned at any time at no AP cost, cancelling the movement penalty;*

Cost = 3pts per point of armor.

CREW AND MISCELLANOUS OPTIONS

CORE BLOCK SYSTEM

You all asked for it, you got it. The now famous CBS used by the RX-78 Gundam, the MSZ-010 ZZ Gundam, the Round Vernian Vifam and many others can be adapted to your homemade design as an alternate way to escape a dying mecha and still keep on fighting (like a true anime hero!).

The CBS is a small fighter craft folded inside the torso of the mecha and containing the cockpit. In case of emergency, the main body separates (or simply opens) at the waist and the Core fighter is launched. [Note that some old mecha designs had their fighter in the head, like Mazinger Z.] It now acts like a normal aerospace unit, albeit a weak one.

The mecha carrying their Core fighter as part of the torso, like the Gundams, can perform an interesting maneuver to escape a grapple: separating the body in half! You can see such a maneuver in 0083, when Kou uses it with the GP-01/FB to escape a mobile armor.

- *the Core fighter acts like an escape pod in the event of an explosion;*
- *it can be released anytime (don't forget that the cockpit is in it! The mecha becomes an immobile hulk.);*
- *it has the following caracteristics: SI 5, Armor 1d6, Flight limit 15", AP ratio: 3"/AP, turn radius 3";*
- *for 5 pts, it carries the smallest weapon of the mecha;*
- *mecha equipped with a CBS can escape grapple by separating the body. Can be used only once per game. Escape automatically, but loses one third of total SI, not current, and 1d6 armor.*

Cost = 50 pts.

CONCLUSION

All these systems were written on the run, so they only had minimal playtesting. If you think a system is just too cheap (or too costly, or invincible), don't hesitate to modify it.

And if you come up with more devious ideas for other anime equipment, don't hesitate to share it with us so we may publish a third Mecha! Optional Rules article. We'll be waiting for your battle reports!

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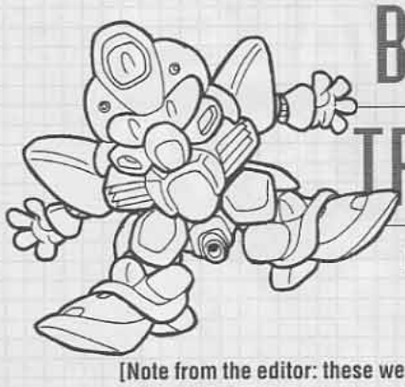


BITS'N TRICKS

By Bill Mayo

[Note from the editor: these were first published as regular columns in the well-known fanzine The Rose. Bill Mayo is the man behind the Anime Modelers Guild, a South Carolina modeling club that's doing very well in the south. Their address is: AMG, 1011 Wando St, Columbia, SC 29205 4552. Write to them for membership rates.]

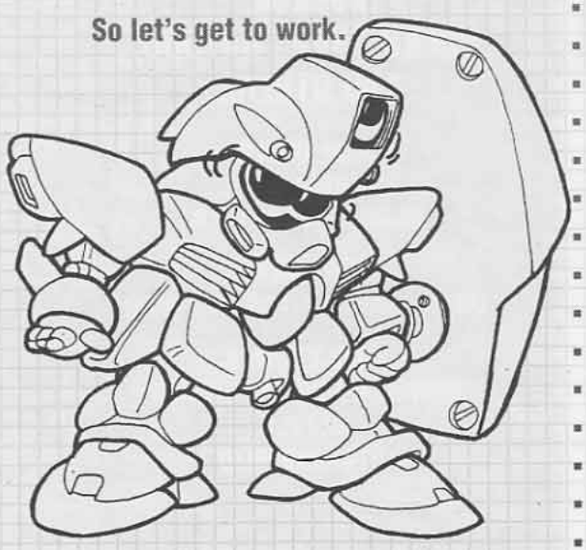
ANIME: ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE HOBBIES IN THE WORLD

I ran across this quote recently. Kinda depressing, isn't it? This applies to anime modeling, too, especially if you have a thing for Garage Kits. But happily, there are many exceptions.

Take Tomy's "Picronia Dem & Sig" set from *Lensman*. This kit typifies the charm of anime models. The box is small and compact and amply illustrated with cels and photos of the finished kit. The model itself features an elaborately detailed base with a postcard-sized cel reproduction that slots in at the back - a neat mini diorama! The price - $2.98!

Another example is Tsukuda's "Goliath Robot & Sheeta" from *Laputa*. Again, the packaging is small, concise and beautifully illustrated. Tsukuda's castings vary; this one's spot-on. Price - about $10.

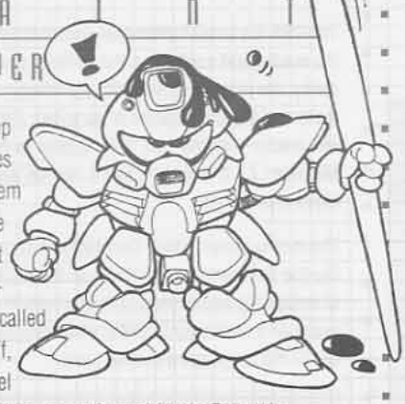
So let's get to work.



Today's project: the "Fledermavs" (Bat) jump jet from the K. Yokoyama/Hobby Japan collaborative series *SF3D*. I want to go for a stealth look while maintaining the sensuous line and color of Islamic and Oriental art. I'll need newspaper, spray paint and a bag of taco shells. First up, I take a flat black stove paint, shake it and give the nozzle just enough pressure to get some paint sputtering out. What I want is a random polka dot pattern. Next, I crunch up the taco shells and place the pieces on the model. I'll streak the model with flat red and metallic gold (not blow the chips off). Now I dump the shell bits and go over the model surface again with more black polka dots. Later I'll apply a thin black wash and a little highlighting. A patina of old metal caused by the red and gold highlights the black camouflage pattern.

I'm very pleased with the results!

PAINT REMOVER



I did pick up some supplies and one item that might be of interest to you modelers. It's called Easy-Lift-Off, and the label says that it will remove paint and decals. Put out by the Floquil-Polly S Corp., this is a tool that will come in very handy around my work bench. I've applied some ELO, per directions, to a Drifand Dal cannon array that I've been wanting to redo. The cannons were originally primed and double coated plus being highlighted with Metalizer lacquer and Alphacolor poster chalk. I'll be amazed if this stuff does the job. It doesn't smell bad enough to be effective. In fact, it has a pleasant, agreeable odor. Using a stiff bristle toothbrush, I work over the area. The paint is coming up smoothly, and the plastic seems to be unharmed! It looks like Polly S Easy-Lift-Off actually works, I'm happy to say.

WEATHERING

Weathering and camouflage are topics guaranteed to get a conversation going around anime modelers. I had one *Gundam* mecha modeler tell me that he didn't feel weathering was appropriate as mechs didn't show wear in space. He had just taken the 1st place trophy in an important contest, so everyone was all ears. This was especially embarrassing as I was standing there holding a model that was heavily "wear dated".

COLOR SCHEMES

Many references are available for every imaginable style of camouflage, from the colorful WW1 aircraft schemes, to the latest Hizack variation in *Hobby Japan*. Yes, some modelers maintain that cel work is the only true documentation for an anime kit, but I think any SF related subject begs to be experimented with. Then again, in one contest I saw a *Robotech* Condar (*Dougram* Soltic "Bushman") with red Russian stars on it. Hmm... now that might be stretching it a bit! [Why not? I have a Round Vernian Wug with Russian stars on it! MAV]

GIMME A BREAK...

I am sometimes asked to build models for other people. Since I personally don't model outside sci-fi, these breaks can be challenging and a lot of fun. And you'd think a little plane like a WW2 P-51 would be easy, right? Well, after 25 coats of Metalizer, each with its own mask, I began feeling (to quote Anna Kavan) like I was up against "something huge, nebulous and vaguely python-like." Luckily, it turned out well and the P51 pilot who got the model was pleased.

SHED SOME LIGHT ON IT

Museums are very careful to light their exhibits a particular way, one that will show the work to its best advantage and also be easy on the viewer's eyes. Models rarely benefit from such flattering lighting, and the "dungeons" where a lot of models get created would cause Dr. Frankenstein to blow a fuse. I never realized what a seriously big help a good hobby work light could be until I got one. A good graphic arts lamp is easy on the eyes and lets you see what you're doing. When the weather's nice you'll find me outside, Ole Sol (not the one in *Akira*!) being my favorite light to work in.

TOO EXPENSIVE!

I've been wanting a Briareos garage kit for a long time. When I got word that a couple had been located in Japan, I was "not in my right mind"! The bad news: the price was something like the national dept. Do you think garage kits will ever get cheaper? ... Maybe I'll get richer.

OLD KITS

I didn't get the big *Appleseed* guy, but things were soon looking up. Remember those crazed *Lupin 3* kits from Gunze Sangyo that showed up a few years back and

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

quickly disappeared? Well, one reappeared in a North Carolina hobby shop and followed me home. This is a nutty model! And, the always-friendly guys at Event Horizon got a couple of the early Bandai *Kai Shiden* figures and were nice enough to call me. There are still many older anime kits, really terrific models, floating around out there.

THE SEARCH FOR REALISM

The search for realism is a quest that takes modelers through some frustrating changes. In anime, thankfully, the subject matter is 2-dimensional, and it's easier to capture the details. But then, with anime characters, there may not be much detail!

I have a game I play where I try to match faces of actors with the anime subject I'm working on. It's been a help, especially when I'm trying to build a darker, shadow foundation. Animated characters aren't known to have a great variety of skin tones! And since we're working in 3D, it gives the finished figure a little something extra. And it's fun! I can think of a half dozen guys I'd like to see play Char Aznable.

HEAVY METAL

Metal finishes are great for figure detailing and can change an ordinary mech into something quite striking. An airbrush is needed for the metalizer-type paints, but Rub-n-Buff brand and similar waxes do a neat job and come in a variety of metal colors. Metal foils work well and look like the real thing, 'cause they are! One of the thinnest, shiniest and easiest to work with foils for modelers comes to us courtesy of a Nestle's Crunch bar. (The Crunch foil technique is explained in detail in the 3/89 issue of *Fine Scale Modeler*.)

The model companies ARII and IMAI both produced limited edition "metal finish" models for the popular *Macross* series at one time. To me, the metal skins are much more convincing with the addition of metal paints or waxes, foils, decals, etc.

By the way, one of the earliest coinage metals (Asia Minor) was a mixture of gold and silver called electrum. You don't usually think of these two mixed together, but here, let me pop in *Iczer One* and check out that beautiful mane of hers...oooh, don't doubt it - electrum definitely!

THOSE EYES!

I was leafing through a copy of *Hobby Japan* looking for column ideas, when I got stuck on a 1/144 scale Hamma-Hamma in bright jungle green. Unusual mecha designs are my passion, and this one from *ZZ Gundam* is definitely "out there"!

But... Why is it that guys build mechs and girls build figures? A friend who's in the anime model mail order business says only about 5% of his customers are females and they only order figures. Generally, figures tend to be easy to assemble compared to the more complicated mecha kits, but there's one area of figure modeling that's harder than anything else in anime modeling - those eyes!

I think the first thing I noticed about anime were those trademark kaleidoscopes of expression and color. Just how challenging are they to paint? Personally, I stewed over a model for days because the eyes weren't quite right. Painting anime eyes requires a steady hand and a good sense of color and hi-lite definition. And the larger the scale, the easier your job will be. I remember spending many frustrating hours on a 1/20 scale Nausicaa who's eyes were tiny and poorly cast. On a happier note, someone remarked recently that Iczer-3's eyes were getting bigger all the time!

When painting eyes, source material is very important. If you're like me, you've tried to sit in front of the TV with your VCR on pause - not the best way to go about it! Your better bet is to work from close-up stills. And yes, production cels would be nice! But seriously, pre-planning, good source material and practice will pay off. I'd also recommend investing in a couple of good brushes. Windsor & Newton, Morritta and M. Grumbacher are good choices. With good tools you'll be surprised at just how accomplished you really are.

Complementary colors and the all-important hi-liters will help bring those sparkling "windows" to life.

Here's a book I've found helpful: Louise Gordon's *How to Draw the Human Head/Techniques and Anatomy*. Don't be scared off by the title, this book is down-to-earth good advice.

Well, that's it for now. If you liked these small modeling texts, don't worry: there's plenty more where that came from! See you next time!

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MODEL SHOWCASE: XM-06 DAGHI-IRIS

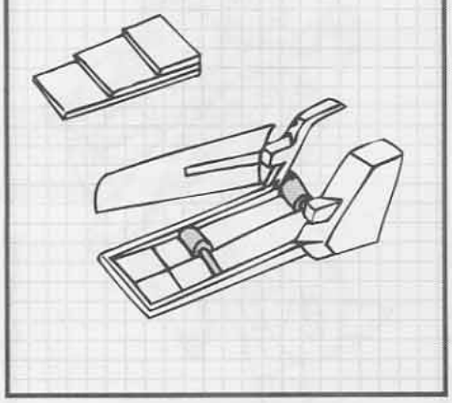
by Dominique Durocher

Like all the other F91 kits, the XM-06 Dahgi-Iris Scout MS is a very good kit. It fits great together and has considerable range-of-motion, but on closer inspection one can find many things to improve.

The first thing to do is to remove most, if not all, of the alignment pins on the model. Of course, this is generally a good idea for all kits. Be careful which ones you remove from the legs. Leave them at least on one side of each leg so the structure linking the thigh, leg and foot can be attached, and leave the one in the middle holding the PE sleeve for the leg armor in place. By the way, never throw these pins away: they can be pretty handy, as you will see later.

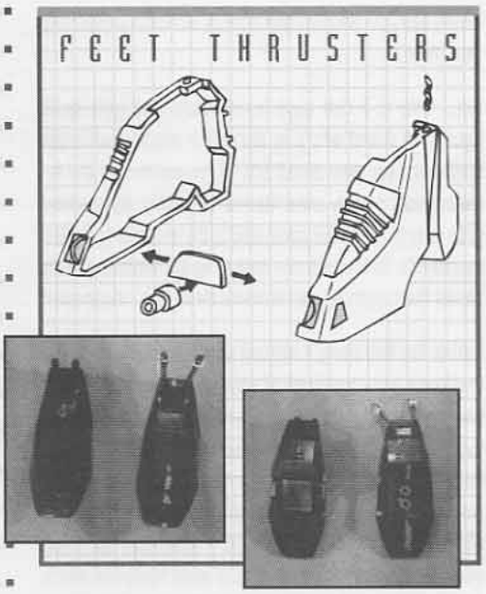
The parts that need the most work are the shoulders, along with the feet and part of the legs. Apart from the pins, only some styrene sheets and tubes, aluminum tubes, and springs (more about these later) will be needed.

SHOULDER UNITS



The shoulder units were modified by first cutting off the alignment pins on both parts and sanding down those on the side extensions until they completely vanished. The radiator plates were then built-up with three sheets of 0.005 inch styrene. The first sheet should start at the level of the first rise in level of the shoulder plate, the second at the same distance after that, and again the same for the third. All three should finish at the level of the second pin.

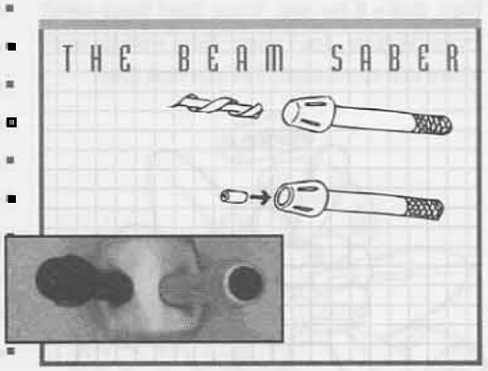
FEET THRUSTERS



Some of the greatest omissions on this model are the many thrusters found in the feet. Those in each toe are merely represented by a circular dip within a rectangular housing, which do not actually look like anything recognizable. This square must first be cut out along with the two vents on the sides of the toe (shaped areas). A thick (0.040) styrene back wall is then added to block off the rest of the foot cavity. The thruster itself is built-up with two concentric aluminum tubes, the smallest being 1/16 in diameter and the other one size larger in order to fit snugly. The smaller tube should be cut so that its top slightly protrudes from the toe but with the lower end still within it. The larger diameter tube is cut about 1/16 inch shorter and the two are glued with one extremity flush. These two are then glued to the toe back wall, centered on the square opening.

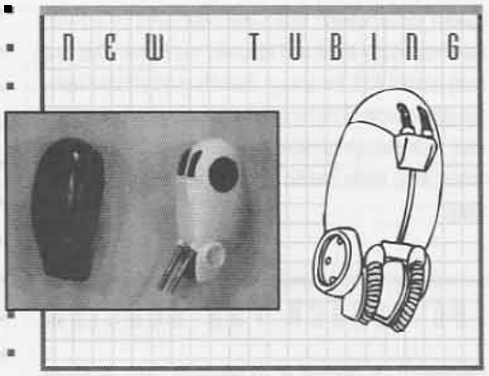
The two thrusters under the foot are formed with previously cut alignment pins (I told you to keep them, although mine actually came from a Valkyrie II kit). Just cut them down to about 1/16 in height and sand their edges round. Then glue them to the central part of the foot and you have instant thrusters.

THE BEAM SABER



One can easily see that the kit's beam saber is, well, quite bland. That flat top just doesn't look good. So I drilled a pilot hole down the middle and widened it with an X-Acto knife. I then added a bit of styrene tube in the middle for the plasma injector ring. Painting the outside wall in gun metal and the inner ring steel, we get a rather nice little beam emitter unit.

NEW TUBING



Most of the tubing was replaced with other materials in order to get more flexibility in most places or to replace solid molded ones for a better appearance. There are two types of tubes found on this model. One is braided, and is found on the feet and upper thighs. They do not need to be replaced on the thighs (since the area is practically not visible outside the armor skirts), but those on the feet do since they are straight rods that interfere with the foot's mobility and are quite visible. These can be replaced by braided gift wrapping cord. This has a square rubber core with braided silver or gold strips around it. Cut two pieces about an inch in length and pass it through two holes you drill where the original rods are. Tie up both ends or they will start to fall apart. You can then paint these in gray or black and have much better looking hydraulic feeds than before.

The other type of tubing is coiled. It is the most common on this model. It is also found in two different sizes. At the lower end of the thighs, two coiled tubes are molded at the rear of the knee joint. These should be cut at the level where they enter a smooth jacket, and this should then be drilled out to the size of the tubes. The tubes themselves can be replaced by tightly coiled springs about 1.5 millimeters in diameter. On my model, I used pulley springs from model railroad locomotives, but they are rather stiff. These springs can be found in hobby stores dealing in model railroads (of course). I would rather recommend other, more flexible springs, like Wave's A-Springs (available at NewType). Cut them about a half-inch in length and glue them into the jackets. This can wait until the model is finished, as you can then leave them unpainted. Since they are already metallic, they look great as is.

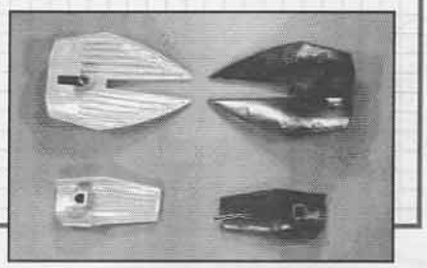
More of these coiled tubes can be found on the torso, linking it with the backpack and the shoulders. Polyethylene rods are supplied with the kit, but they lack flexibility for the shoulders, and constantly pop out. They also don't look particularly good. Be careful, these are larger than the ones on the thighs, being perhaps 3/32 or a little more, but less than 1/8. Again, I use a larger size of pulley spring (both came as a set), but its stiffness is annoying.

The jackets for these are molded on the PE parts, so they will need replacing. Find either a plastic or aluminum tube slightly larger than the spring but small enough to fit into the chest and backpack openings, and cut five lengths of it. The first, and longest, must pass through both sides of the torso, providing the jackets for both shoulder tubes and a base for the other two adjacent ones. In order to fit it in, the pins which would hold the tubes in place must be

Raymond P Campiglio (Order #33181648)

removed. The next two jackets go in the other openings in the chest. Cut one end flat, and the other curved. The curved end is then glued to the tube already in place with the flat end's lower extremity barely coming above the edge of the hole. Two more short lengths are needed for the backpack's jackets. Once the model is complete, cut the spring to the appropriate length to fit between each jacket.

DETAILING THE ARMOR SKIRTS



The armor skirts around the waist of the Dahgi-Iris, as with all the CV machines, have considerable inside detail. That was not reproduced on the model. To add them, I used square strips of styrene, about 0.010 on each side: they were cut into 5 lengths per skirt (or side for the rear one) slightly shorter than the skirts. The strips were then glued vertically, and evenly spaced (more or less) on the inside of each section. The lower ends were discarded with a diagonal cut, resulting in the tapered look seen in the picture.

The front skirt was detailed in two ways. First I cut out the vents at its bottom. This was done by starting a couple of pilot holes with a chuck and a very small drill bit, then finishing with an X-Acto knife. Also, since this now left gaps where they were not wanted, I filled the rear of the skirt by covering it with a thin styrene sheet.

PAINTING

One of the best things about this model is the thruster cones they supply. Since they have great detail already they do not need any modifications. I just want to mention that it is a good idea to paint them in a dark metallic finish, like steel. I used Humbrol MetalCote Polished Steel, buffed it and then sealed it in with Gunze Sangyo Clear. Not sealing it means they can never be touched again, or fingerprints will mar them, and using an enamel to seal them will react with the paint and reduce its sheen.

The many sensors were first painted in chrome silver to get a basic shine. Some were then coated with a drop of white glue. This dries to a clear bulge, much like lens. I then painted over them with Tamiya clear blue. For the three beam lenses in the abdomen, a second coat of clear green was added to make them look different from the sensors.

I decided to paint my Dahgi-Iris in its Federation colors, overall cream and light tan, as a change from the dark colors I had been painting on aircraft for a long time. Since it represents a freshly painted MS, I did not weather it (although some accidental staining does give that effect). Only the interior surface of the thrusters can use a little dark dry-brushing to bring out the details.

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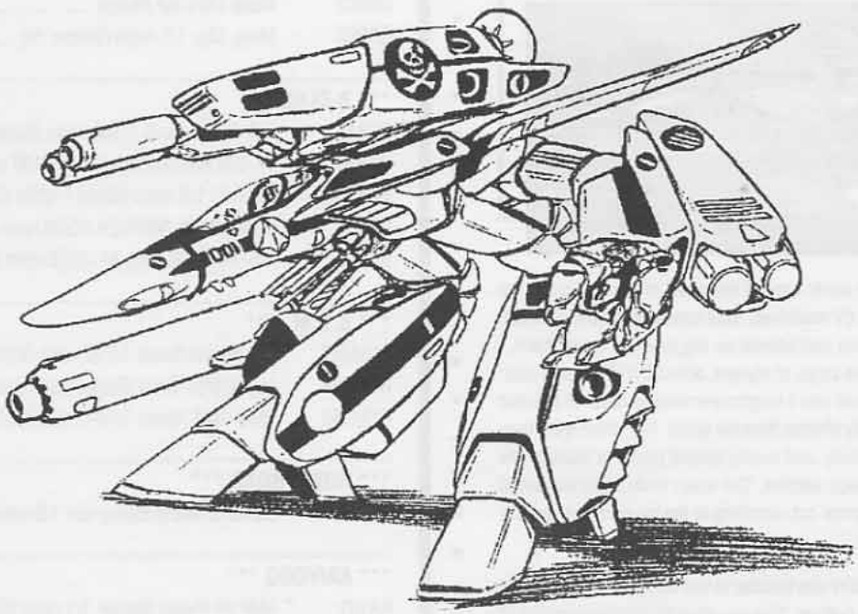

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YES, YOUR VOICE IS IMPORTANT TO US!

Help us make Mecha-Press even more YOUR magazine by answering our little questionnaire. Photocopy this page or just write your answers on a sheet of paper and send it back to us.

1- How old are you?

a) Less than 18 b) Between 18 and 24
c) Between 25 and 35 d) Between 36 and 45
e) Between 45 and 59 f) Over 60

2- What is your sex?

a) Male b) Female

3- What level of studies have you completed?

a) High School b) College
c) University d) Graduate studies
e) Self-taught

4- What is your present occupation?

a) Student b) Industry worker
c) Office worker d) Service/sale worker
e) Professional f) Military
g) Self-employed h) Unemployed
i) Other:

5- Where do you live? (State or province if in USA or Canada, Country if not).

6- Are you a subscriber?

a) Yes b) No

7- Do you buy/read other magazines or fanzines on gaming, modeling or animation? If yes, name them:

8- What subject do you prefer? (You can circle more than one answer).

a) Gaming b) Model Kits
c) Japanese animation d) Animation in general
e) Manga

9- Which games do you play? (You can circle more than one answer).

a) Battletech b) Cyberpunk
c) GURPS d) Mecha!™
e) Mekton f) Rift
g) Robotech h) Teenagers From Outer Space
i) Others:

10- What else do you read? (You can circle more than one answer).

a) Science Fiction novels b) Comic books
c) General literature d) Scientific magazines
e) Daily newspapers f) News magazines
g) Others:

11- Would you be interested in contributing to the magazine (article, reviews, art)?

a) Yes, (precise what kind of contribution) b) No

12- Are you satisfied by the cover art and the general look of the magazine?

a) Yes b) No

13- Are you satisfied by the articles in the magazine?

a) Yes b) No

14- What kind of coverage do you prefer for the magazine?

a) One subject covered in depth
b) Several subjects covered through smaller articles

15- What aspect is the most important for you?

a) Modeling b) Gaming

16- Do you think there are enough illustrations inside the magazine?

a) Yes b) No

17- Are you satisfied with the printing quality of the magazine?

a) Yes b) No

18- Mecha-Press used to be 36 pages in a 9 1/4 x 12 format. The original idea was to have a BIG magazine for big mecha but it turned out to be an encombring size for display and shipping. To correct that problem we will reduce its size to 8 1/4 x 10 3/4, raise the page count to 44 pages, and make 8 of those pages IN COLOR. Are you favorable to this change?

a) Yes b) No

19- The price of the magazine originally was $4.95 US/$5.50 Can. Higher production cost (raise in paper price, inflation, and of course those 8 color pages) leaves us no choice but to raise the price. Which price would you judge reasonable and be ready to pay?

a) $5.50 US/CAN b) $5.95 US/CAN
c) $6.25 US/CAN d) $6.50 US/CAN
e) $6.95 US/CAN

20- 70% of the *Mecha-Press* #4 copies contained a free poster of *Dominion*'s Puma Sisters. Would you be interested to see more inserted posters in MP, even if it may occasionnally raise the price of the magazine?

a) Yes b) No

21- What can you suggest to improve the magazine?

22- What subjects can you suggest for future issues of Mecha-Press?

23- We will release one special issue each year. The first special issue will be on Spaceships. What are your suggestions for our future special issues?

24- Have you bought/read/seen any of our other products? If yes, which one? (You can circle more than one answer).

a) Protoculture Addicts
b) Anime Shower Special
c) Cybersuit Arkadyne (comic by Tim Eldred)
d) Gates of Pandragon (comic)
e) Akira Poster-Zine
f) Gamers' Herald (gaming journal)
g) Night's Edge (Cyberpunk Sourcebook on Vampires)
h) Necrology (Cyberpunk Adventure on Flatlining)
i) Science Fiction books (5 titles — in French)
j) Samizdat (Quebec SF fanzine — in French)

25- For how long have you known/read Mecha Press?

a) Less than three months
b) Between 3 and 6 months
c) Between 6 months and a year
d) Since issue #1
e) Since the first issue #1 (big, red, duo-tone)

26- What kind of merchandizing products would you buy from Ianus Publications if they were produced? (You can circle more than one answer).

a) T-Shirt
b) Poster
c) Sticker
d) Best of the magazine articles
e) Conversion kit for model
f) Garage kit
g) Resin Figurine
h) Set of dice
i) Reprint of old issues
j) Our own Role-Playing Game
k) Gaming adventure based on anime series
l) Subtitled video (just kidding!)

For questions 27 to 30, vote by putting the letters corresponding to your choice from the list below:

a) Editorial
b) "This Month" (general presentation of the issue)
c) Mailing column
d) News: Animation
e) News: Games
f) News: Model kits
g) Interview
h) Report on convention
i) Review: Anime & manga
j) Review: Games
k) Review: Model Kits
l) Short comic story (1-3 pgs)
m) Engineering Outlook
n) Optional rules: Battletech
o) Optional rules: Mecha!™
p) Optional rules: Mekton
q) Optional rules: Teenagers from Outer Space (TFOS)
r) Mecha design adaptation: Battletech
s) Mecha design adaptation: Mecha!™
t) Mecha design adaptation: Mekton
u) Anime: article
v) Anime: synopsis
w) Anime: character guide
x) Anime: mecha design & specs
y) Model kits: article
z) Model kits: conversion tips

27- From the list above, which five subjects do/would you prefer the most in *Mecha-Press*?

28- Which five subjects do/would you like in second place?

29- Give five subjects that you don't mind seeing removed from the magazine:

30- Give five subjects that you really don't like in the magazine:

Thank you for answering this questionnaire and sending it back to us:

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We will also welcome any other comment from you.

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